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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

MANHUNTS: A POLICY MAKER'S GUIDE TO HIGH-VALUE TARGETING

by

Benjamin A. Dawson

June 2013

Thesis Advisor: David Tucker
Second Reader: Jon Braga

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This thesis answers a simple question: Is there strategic utility in targeting high-value individuals via covert or clandestine actions? This thesis submits that there is strategic utility to high-value individual targeting (HVI or HVT) operations and offers a guide for national policy makers regarding when and how such operations should be conducted.

Covert and clandestine actions must be conducted as part of a strategy and in support of clearly defined national goals. Foremost among the strategic considerations of covert action is the need to establish a desired endstate characterized by specific goals upon which a strategy can be built. Second, the strategy and subsequent methods must be consistent with the nation's values. Last, any strategy must be continually evaluated for its effectiveness and revised when needed.

This thesis analyzes several operations conducted by Israel between 1960 and 1973. Israel provides United States policy makers with relevant examples due to similar democratic structures and security issues. The selected operations, particularly those directed against Palestinian terrorists, have parallels to the United States' efforts against al Qaeda. The analysis of Israeli operations provides insight for the considerations and intellectual framework policy makers should understand before committing national resources to high-risk lethal operations.

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MANHUNTS: A POLICY MAKER'S GUIDE TO HIGH-VALUE TARGETING

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BSO	Black September Organization
CT	Counterterrorism
HVI	High-Value Individual
HVT	High-Value Target
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DIME	Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic
DoD	Department of Defense
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
MoE	Measures of Effectiveness
MoP	Measures of Performance
OPSEC	Operational Security
PLFP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PM	Prime Minister
SAC	Supreme Arab Committee
SoY	Spring of Youth
SS	Schutz Stafel (WWII German elite units)
UBL	Usama bin Laden (Osama bin Laden)
WoG	Wrath of God
WWII	World War 2

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Last, thank you to my wife for putting up with my late nights of clacking on the keyboard and hiding in my office while she took care of family.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. DISCUSSION

This thesis is intended to address a simple question: Is there a strategic utility targeting high-value individuals via covert or clandestine actions?[1] This thesis submits that there is a strategic utility to high-value individual targeting (HVI or HVT) operations and offers a guide to national policy makers and senior military leaders regarding when and how such operations should be conducted. The historic example of similar operations conducted by the United States' close allies can provide valuable insight for the considerations and intellectual framework policy makers should understand before committing national resources to high-risk lethal operations. This thesis will analyze several operations conducted by Israel between 1960 and 1973. Due to both similar democratic structures and security concerns, Israeli lessons from covert action may provide valuable insight to U.S. policy makers. The Israeli operations selected, particularly those directed against Palestinian terrorists, have parallels to the United States' efforts against Al Qaeda.

Covert and clandestine actions must be conducted as part of a strategy and in support of clearly defined national goals. Foremost amongst the strategic considerations of covert action is the need to clearly establish a desired endstate, characterized by specific goals, upon which planners can build a strategy. Covert and clandestine actions conducted in isolation are tactical actions without higher strategic purpose and only serve to expose U.S. persons to mortal risk and

---

[1] William Safire, "Covert Operation or Clandestine?" *New York Times*, 14 February, 2005. Safire provides a brief distinction between Covert and Clandestine:

Covert: Defined by USC Title 50, Section 413b as "to influence political, economic or military conditions abroad, where it is intended that the role of the United States government will not be apparent or acknowledged publicly."

Clandestine: "A clandestine operation differs from a covert operation," goes the definition in the Defense Department's current Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, "in that emphasis is placed on concealment of the operation rather than on concealment of the identity of the sponsor."

national leaders to political risk that may be detrimental to the nation as a whole. The nation's covert and clandestine capabilities, resident in the military and intelligence services, are a means to accomplish tactical objectives. Application of those capabilities brings inherent risks and should only be done as part of a comprehensive strategy.

There are many reasons why leaders should consider applying covert capabilities. In the realm of counterterrorism, clandestine effort can enable access to imminent threats operating from sanctuaries in remote or politically sensitive areas of the world. Covert and clandestine actions allow the actor to minimize the chance of expanding or creating a conflict with another nation by reducing the signature and impacts of any tactical missions, while at the same time allowing the actor to achieve a particular objective. The discretion and precision that can be achieved through covert and clandestine means is heightened by modern technology and the demonstrated skill and experience of America's special operations forces and intelligence professionals. That discretion makes covert tools an attractive choice for national decision makers who desire decisive effects in politically sensitive or non-permissive environments.

This thesis offers a framework to ensure that covert tools are tied to a strategy that is consistent with national goals and, most importantly, national values established in the Constitution and restated in modern language in the 2010 National Security Strategy and 2011 National Strategy for Counterterrorism.[2] The suggested framework to ensure proper use of covert

[2] A description of the national values is found in the most recent versions of both the National Security Strategy and the National Strategy for Counterterrorism:

White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: White House, 2010), 35.

White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: White House, 2011), 5.

means is called the Strategic Cycle.[3] Figure 1 depicts the Strategic Cycle consisting of three phases: Visualize, Design, and Evaluate.

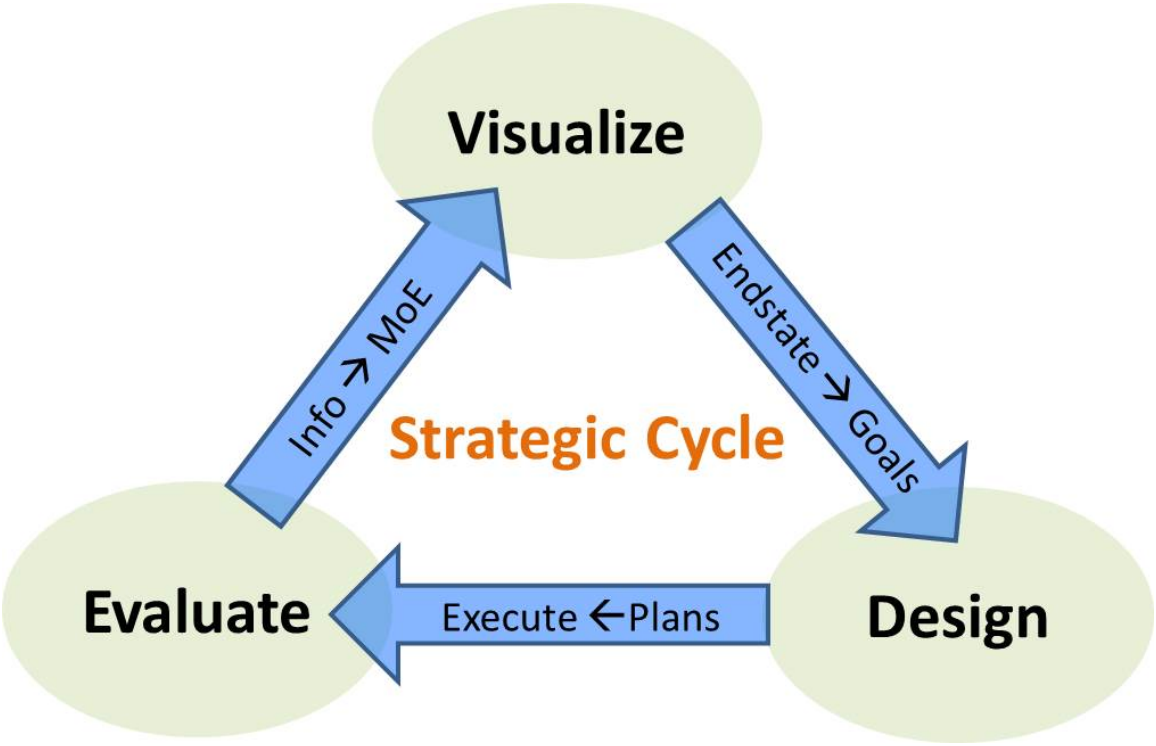

Figure 1. Strategic Cycle

The Visualize phase starts with defining the problem that must be addressed. Then leaders must envision an environment where the problem is either eliminated or reduced to a manageable level; this is called the endstate. From the endstate, specific goals should be established that, if achieved, will enable the endstate conditions. During the Design phase, leaders and planners develop a strategy to achieve the endstate goals. Ideally, this strategy considers using all of the instruments of national power: diplomatic, military, information and economic.[4] Strategy leads to specific plans which achieve milestone objectives in support of one or more national goals. Plans are

[3] *Strategic Cycle* is a term designed for this thesis and not derived from any other source. See Figure 1.

[4] Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3–0: Joint Operations*, (Washington, DC: Pentagon, 11 August 2011), I-4, Para 3.b.

conducted by individual agencies or, more frequently, by joint-interagency teams. The execution of specific plans at the tactical and operational levels falls under the Evaluate phase of the cycle. During this phase, relevant information should be collected during and after each mission, regardless of tactical success or failure, to determine if the desired strategic effects are being achieved. In order to make accurate assessments, planners at all levels must establish measure of effectiveness. If tactical plans are successful, but strategic goals are not being met, then the plans or the entire strategy may need to be revised. As more information is collected about the environment, the endstate and the goals may also need to be amended. Figure 4 at the end of this thesis offers a detailed flow chart that if followed, can guide planners through a strategic cycle. The key to success for any operation, be it overt or covert, is to ensure that it is tied to a comprehensive strategy. The conceptual tools offered in this thesis could apply to any national security crisis. Situations that may require lethal force, however, often are accompanied by high levels of political risk. For this reason, a strategic framework is particularly relevant when considering covert or clandestine actions. Man-hunting, now commonly referred to in military jargon as high value individual targeting (HVI or HVT), has always been controversial as a strategy for defeating a threat.

The controversy regarding HVT operations falls into two categories: 1) effects and 2) politics. While HVT operations conducted inside internationally recognized theaters of war and in compliance with the Geneva conventions need only be evaluated based on their effects, HVT operations outside of theaters of war are inherently more complex as they require consideration of international political relationships and domestic legal, social and political concerns. The post 9/11 war on terror has forced U.S. leaders and policy makers to consider the costs and benefits of HVT operations as part of a broader counterterrorism strategy. The U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism, revised in June 2011, establishes a basic legal justification by clearly naming al-Qaida the enemy in a war on terror and acknowledges that

early post 9/11 CT efforts were conducted in an "environment of legal uncertainty."[5] Additionally, the targeted killing and capture of key al-Qaida individuals, especially Usama bin Laden, is credited as a key element of the successful application of the national CT strategy.[6] Accepting that HVT operations are now a key element of the U.S. CT strategy, it is imperative that national decision makers employ HVT operations in a manner that is both consistent with U.S. core values and achieves optimal strategic effects.

B. BACKGROUND

Israel, a historically and ideologically close ally with the U.S., has been employing HVT strategies to counter threats since before its independence from Britain in 1948. In 1936, Ezra Danin, a founding member of the Zionist Shai (the precursor to Mossad intelligence agency) stated:

> We are not confronting the Arabs, but a very specific Arab. We need to know who he is. Some lad sits up on a hill or down in a valley and fires – and we all scream and panic and leap into the trenches when all we're really talking about is Ali or Muhammad. We have to be able to identify him and act against him.7

Danin's philosophy on countering terrorism would become the cornerstone of Israeli counterterror strategy after 1948. Israel also readily applied its man-hunting skills to locate and capture Nazi war criminals years after the end of WWII; most notably capturing Adolf Eichmann, the infamous architect of the final solution to kill the Jews, in Buenos Aires in 1960. In order to capture Adolf Eichmann, Mossad agents used various covers to infiltrate Argentina, conduct surveillance and eventually capture Eichmann in order to bring him to trial for the genocide of over 5 million Jews. In 1972, in response to the massacre of 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, Israel conducted one of the boldest covert action campaigns in history, killing several of the Palestinian terrorists in

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[5] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*, 6.

[6] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*, Introduction.

[7] Ian Black and Benny Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars: A History of Israel's Intelligence Services* (New York: Grove Press, 1991), 7.

Europe. The targeted Palestinians were deemed responsible for the Munich massacre and were killed in a series of dramatic and often very public assassinations.

The U.S. can learn valuable lessons from analyzing the Israeli HVT operations and their overall impact on achieving national objectives. This thesis will analyze selected Israeli man-hunts conducted as clandestine or covert actions from the viewpoint of key national decision makers, following the operations through the execution and effects and in the context of the international and domestic environments.

1. Operation Eichmann

The Israeli mission to capture infamous Nazi War criminal Adolf Eichmann in May 1960 is an example of a clandestine action in a non-permissive political environment in pro-fascist Argentina. Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion assessed that a request for Argentina to arrest and then extradite Eichmann to Israel had a high-potential of resulting in Eichmann being warned by Nazi sympathizers in the Argentine government. Eichmann was largely responsible for the death of over 5 million Jews during the Holocaust and his capture and trial represented a national goal of paramount value. The value of justice for Eichmann's crimes parallels the value of American justice against Usama Bin Laden for the terror attacks of September 2001. Although Israeli-Argentine political relations were threatened as a result of the Eichmann capture, the mission represented a moral imperative to Israeli leaders. The domestic support for the operation well outweighed the international political risks. In the Eichmann scenario, the endstate desired was one were the emotional wounds of the Holocaust that affected an entire nation could heal through achieving the goal of a public justice. The strategy, although it failed to adequately address effective mitigation of the post-operations international political crisis, was well conceived with regard to the tactical mission and domestic politics.

2. Wrath of God

In contrast to the tactical and strategic success of the Eichmann operation, the Israeli response to September 1972 massacre of 11 Israeli Olympic team members in Munich was far less successful. Operation Wrath of God was hastily conceived by Israel to target the Black September Organization (BSO), a Palestinian terror group under the umbrella of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Wrath of God was conceived largely in response to the emotional rage that consumed Israeli social and political life after the Munich massacre, which the BSO had carried out. The endstate envisioned by Prime Minister Golda Meir was one where Israeli citizens were safe from terror attacks. The goals she prescribed seemed to require more than just a military strategy: 1) biblically consistent justice or "an eye for an eye" 2) Deterrence of future Palestinian terror 3) Prevention of attacks currently in planning. No aspect of the Israel's military efforts attempted to address the underlying conditions behind the Palestinian violence against Israel. The strategy Israel adopted to address Palestinian violence was not born from a comprehensive whole-of-government approach, but was really just a continuation of Israeli's default "eye for an eye" habitual response adopted during the Arab-Jewish conflict that began during the days of the British mandate over Palestine. PM Meir and her top advisors simply prescribed a tactical plan of targeted killings of a selected list of PLO members operating in Europe.

The tactic of assassination was, for the most part, successful in killing the individuals on the list with minimal collateral damage, until an entire Israeli team killed the wrong target in Lillehammer, Norway in July 1973. The team exercised poor tradecraft and was quickly arrested by local police, resulting in full exposure of Israeli sponsorship for the mission. Up until Lillehammer, the missions were tactically successful, yet all indications are that the mission compelled the PLO to increase its efforts to conduct spectacular violence against Israeli targets on a global stage. Israel seemed to ignore this fact and continued to hunt Palestinians across Europe. The tactic became the strategy by default and the stated strategic

goals were not accomplished. The dissociation of strategy and tactical plans often plagues military planners. The U.S. drone program directed against militants in Pakistan may fall into the category of a successful tactic without any strategy.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature for this thesis can be organized into two groups: 1) Historical accounts and commentary on the HVT operations 2) Theory and opinions regarding politics, counterterrorism, ehtics and international law. The historical accounts are primarily books written by persons involved in the actions or by scholars who compiled various primary and some secondary sources. In general, the historic accounts in English tend to rely heavily on Israeli sources, although some books such as *One Day in September* do include a good deal of comments from PLO members and Arab diplomats.[8] The preponderance of Israeli centric English language texts, although naturally biasing, does actually support the research method of analyzing the operations by comparing Israeli stated goals, observing decision and supporting motivations, and then evaluating how well the effects of the operations met the goals. A few selected texts offer greater perspective and detail on Palestinian viewpoints with regard to the PLO actions during the 1960s and 1970s. The most detailed text with a Palestinian perspective is Yezid Sayigh's *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*.[9] Sayigh avoids associating any PLO actions with terrorism, but does provide quotes from Palestinian leaders about the militant struggle against Israel. With regard to the second grouping of literature, the theory and especially legal opinions are generally much more critical of Israeli approaches and provide more balanced, albeit still primarily western, viewpoints on the strategies that Israel and the U.S. have adopted with regard to man-hunts or HVT operations.

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[8] Simon Reeve, *One Day in September: The Full Story of the 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre and The Israeli Revenge Operation Wrath of God* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011).

[9] Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949–1993* (London: Oxford University Press, 2000).

The historical accounts can be broken into two categories: 1) general historical accounts of Israeli actions during the 20th century. 2) specific accounts of the selected case studies. There are few sanctioned or officially declassified Israeli government documents related to any activities conducted by Israel's intelligence or security agencies. Of note, Ian Black and Benny Morris, state in their introduction to *Israel's Secret Wars* that the study of Israeli covert and clandestine operations is extremely difficult to Israel's generally good operational security (OPSEC) and conservative viewpoint toward releasing documents and information to the media or public. [10] The cases selected for this thesis are a few of the more well documented operations, likely due to the international media and public attention generated by operations. *Israel's Secret Wars* is probably the most comprehensive book written on Israel's security apparatus, partially due to the fact that it was one of the few books written with some amount of approval or cooperation of Israeli officials. Israel's Secret Wars, however, is not very detail oriented about any specific events, rather it portrays Israeli actions in the larger regional and global political context and often cites Israeli officials or documents.

The Eichmann operation is probably the most well documented single case, partially due to the overwhelming international support for Israel's actions and the collective international condemnation of the Nazi human rights violations during WWII. Adolf Eichmann's capture in 1960 was also a sensational news story. Regardless of whether someone approved of Israel's actions or not, the clandestine capture of Adolf Eichmann, publicly announced only after Eichmann was safely in Israeli custody, was immediately exploited for profit with the release of a U.S. independent film in 1961 title: *Operation Eichmann: Manhunt of the Century*.[11] In 1975, Isser Harel's book *The House on Garibaldi* Street was published. Harel was the Mossad chief responsible for the mission to capture Eichmann and his book was and still is the most authoritative and detailed

[10] Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars,* xii.

[11] Lester Cole, *Operation Eichmann*. Independent Film directed by R.G. Springsteen, March 1961. http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0055261/taglines?ref_=tt_stry_tg

account of the mission and the key decisions and events surrounding it. Harel was a key Israeli national decision maker and a direct line to the prime minister and key cabinet members, making his account of the mission an optimal primary source. Other notable sources that provide a great deal of insight about the political context and strategic concerns of the mission are Neal Bascomb's *Hunting Eichmann* published in 2009 and Peter Malkin's 1990 book *Eichmann in My Hands.*[12] [13] Peter Malkin was a team member on the Eichmann Operation and claims to have been the man that first laid hands on Eichmann during the capture mission. Bascomb's book is by far the most unbiased account of the operation, since it is one of the few English language texts that is not solely based on personal accounts of participants. Bascomb does spend two chapters, however, recounting the atrocities that Eichmann was responsible for and how Eichmann initially escaped Germany at WWII's conclusion. The 1988 book The Nazi Hunters provides a good general overview of the total allied efforts immediately upon WWII's conclusion to round-up Nazi officials and also provides a good overview, in the broader international context, of the high profile manhunts conducted years later; chapters 1 and 5 cover Operation Eichmann.

There are several books written Operation Wrath of God, most of which are a compilation of interviews from participants as well as excerpts from journals and media reporting in Europe immediately following the separate missions. All of the sources used in the thesis discuss Operation Wrath of God and Operation Spring of Youth together since the latter was considered to be part of the larger Wrath of God line of operations. Spring of Youth, however, is identified in Israel's Secret Wars as the only mission that was planned and conducted by the elite Sayaret counterterror unit of the IDF, with considerable intelligence and logistics support from the various Israeli intelligence agencies.[14] Ian Black and Benny

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[12] Neal Bascomb, *Hunting Eichmann: How a Band of Survivors and a Young Spy Agency Chased Down the World's Most Notorious Nazi* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009).

[13] Malkin, Peter and Harry Stein, *Eichmann in My Hands* (New York: Warner Books, 1990).

[14] Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, 274–275.

Morris offer only a broad overview of the participants, goals and effects regarding the Wrath of God serious, while Simon Reeve's *One Day in September* gives a detailed account of the Munich massacre and each of the Wrath of God missions.[15] Relying heavily on interviews and media accounts, Reeve's chronology is factually accurate when compared to other sources, but also makes some assumptions about the specific task organization and operational details of some of the missions.

The first chapter of Samual Katz's *Guards Without Borders* provides an excellent primary and secondary source account of the strategic context of Wrath of God and Spring of Youth.[16] Katz addresses Spring of Youth as a separate operation and provides considerable details about the operational planning and decisions involved. In *Striking Back*, written by an IDF intelligence officer, each Wrath of God mission is described in some detail with both Israeli and Palestinian leaders cited, however, the overall tone is clearly pro-Israeli.[17] The most notable book about the Wrath of God operation is George Jonas's *Vengeance*.[18] Jonas's book is based primarily on a series of interviews with one of the Wrath of God team leaders and besides being the inspiration for Steven Spielberg's famed 2005 movie "Munich," Vengeance provides a unique insider's perspective regarding the decisions and results of the Wrath of God missions. One additional source, a 1995 Marine Corps Command and Staff thesis written by Alaxander Calahan, provides a corroborating account of the Wrath of God

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[15] Simon Reeve, One Day in September, .

[16] Samuel Katz, *Guards Without Borders: Israel's War Against Terrorism* (London: Arms and Armour, 1990).

[17] Aaron J. Klein, *Striking Back: The 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre and Israel's Deadly Response* (New York: Random House, 2005).

[18] George Jonas, *Vengeance: The True Story of an Israeli Counterterrorist Team* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005).

missions with additional analysis that strongly praises the boldness and overall effectiveness of the operation.[19]

In the second grouping, political theory and legal opinions, there are a few cornerstone items. James Fearon's theory of Audience Costs and its escalation effects on conflict is particularly relevant in the analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[20] Lisa Hajjar's legal opinion paper comparing Israeli and U.S. counterterror doctrine in the context of international humanitarian and military laws offers unique critique of the legal foundation espoused by U.S. leaders in the U.S. National Strategy for CT published in 2011.[21] David Rudgers also offers some historical basis for the utility of covert actions as a counterpoint to the modern controversy.[22] There are several point papers from political science and legal journals that criticize the use and effectiveness of covert actions with varying degrees of objectivity. Notably, Paul Wilkinson's article on International responses to terrorism discusses the efficacy of several strategies

[19] Alexander B. Calahan, "Countering Terrorism: The Israeli Response to the 1973 Munich Olympic massacre and the Development of Independent Covert Action Teams" (master's thesis, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1995).

[20] James D. Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," *American Political Science Review* 88 (1994): 577–592.

[21] Lisa, Hajjar. "International Humanitarian Law and Wars on Terror: A Comparative Analysis of Israeli and American Doctrines and Policies." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 36, no.1 (Autumn 2006): 21–42.

[22] David Rudgers, "The Origins of Covert Action." *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35 (2000): 249–262.

II. OPERATION EICHMANN

A. DISCUSSION

In some cases, such as the missions to capture Adolf Eichmann or kill Usama Bin Laden, the intrinsic value of the mission to the domestic audience made the decision much easier. In both cases, the targeted individual represented an icon of evil, despised by the majority of the domestic population. In such cases, action, either covert or overt becomes a moral imperative for the nation and often a matter of political survival for national decision makers. Had President Obama not authorized a strike on Usama bin Laden (UBL), given the credible intelligence of UBL's location, the eventual public leak of that fact would likely have been the President's political downfall and potentially cost him the re-election. Similarly with Adolf Eichmann, simply suppressing the reports of Eichmann's presence in Argentina was a significant political risk, especially after Fritz Bauer finally acquired a second corroborating source that identified Ricardo Klement as Eichmann's alias in Argentina.[23]

In the case of Adolf Eichmann, Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion saw the eventual public trial of the man responsible for the death of over 5 million Jews as essential to Israel's identity as a nation born from the holocaust. Both Ben-Gurion and his intelligence chief, Isser Harel, knew full well that capturing Eichmann in Argentina was uncharted territory for the new nation of Israel, and could severely strain Israel's growing political and economic relationship with Argentina. The domestic concerns and the moral imperative to bring Eichmann to justice made the risk acceptable in the eyes of the prime minister. The fact that a covert action was chosen over a formal request for extradition required thorough consideration of post-operation responses and crisis mitigation if the mission were compromised or Israeli attempts to ensure plausible deniability failed to satisfy the Argentinians. Ben-Gurion and Harel failed to fully consider the social

[23] Hanna Yoblonka and Ora Cummings, *State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann* (Westminster, MD: Knopf Publishing, 2004), 16.

and political dynamics in Argentina that would compel the Argentine president to take a political hardline response vis-à-vis Israel in response to the Eichmann incident.

James Fearon's concept of audience costs should be considered in cases where covert action is a possible tool for achieving a national goal, especially when postulating the political blowback of an exposed operation. According to Fearon, the decisions of any leader with respect to an international conflict are largely driven by the leaders own fear of looking inept or weak to his own constituency. The need to appear strong to a domestic audience in the face of potential international conflict applies more so in a democracy, where leaders are elected by popular vote.[24] The use of a covert or clandestine action to achieve a national goal intends to avoid attribution to the actor and therefore reduce the possibility audience costs escalating a conflict internationally. The post-operation responses to both the international and domestic audience should consider the worst case outcome, such as the Eichmann operation, where the misattribution of the act to "private citizens" was immediately discredited both in Israel and Argentina. The required audience costs calculations therefore must consider the domestic costs for both the actor and the recipient, in this case Argentina.

On the domestic front, the clandestine actions may be intended to become public information post-facto in order to garner domestic support such as in the Bin Laden raid or the Eichmann capture. The Eichmann mission was clandestine during the operation and the results announced only after the mission success was determined. The Bin Laden raid was conducted by U.S. SOF, but under U.S. Code Title 50 authorities for covert action and therefore at least nominally under the supervision of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. In each case, the administration deemed that mission success would result in favorable public support whereas a failed mission would not be viewed favorably. Thus the clandestine efforts may still have afforded each actor a measure of deniability.

[24] Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," 577–578.

Operation Eichmann was clandestine with respect to the conduct of the mission, but also covert with respect to the initial post-facto responses to inquiries about how Eichmann came into Israeli custody.[25]

The administration may desire for the action to never be revealed or properly attributed to the government, but must still consider the consequences if it is inadvertently exposed during or immediately after the mission. The notion that an administration may base its decision to act on the surmised public support for such actions, has been a consistent theme throughout recent history, especially in democracies. Fearon states:

> Publicly observable measures of relative military capabilities and relative interests prove to have no direct effect once a crisis begins. Instead, relative audience costs matter: the side with a stronger domestic audience (e.g., a democracy) is always less likely to back down than the side less able to generate audience costs (a non-democracy). More broadly, the analysis suggests that democracies should be able to signal their intentions to other states more credibly and clearly than authoritarian states can.**[26]**

While the Israeli Prime Minister was certain that he would have overwhelming ex-post facto public support for the operation to capture Eichmann based solely on the moral imperative, the same could not be said for Argentine public support for the Israeli action. Argentina under the Peron' administration until 1953 had been an autocratic fascist regime and staunchly pro-German.[27] Even under Peron's more moderate successor, President Frondizi, the nationalist influence in Argentine society and government remained strong, creating a great deal of internal tension and audience costs for the moderate Argentine President.

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[25] An operation can be both clandestine and covert in nature. U.S. Federal Law categorizes covert actions under Title 50 USC, Chapter 15, Section 413(b). The Usama Bin Laden raid was clandestine in order to maintain tactical surprise during the planning and through execution of the mission. Attribution for the UBL raid was intended and delayed until after the mission was completed. During the Eichmann Operation, the mission was also clandestine while the Israeli attempts to misattribute the perpetrators for the mission made it also covert. For a detailed explanation of U.S. Legal definitions see: http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/50/413b

[26] Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," 577.

[27] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews: Peron, the Eichmann Capture and After* (Bethesda, MD: University of Maryland Press, 2002), 167–169.

B. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

On May 23rd, 1960 the Israeli Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, announced to the Israeli parliament that Adolf Eichmann, the German Gestapo Colonel in charge of the SS Jewish Section, was in custody in Israel and would stand trial for war crimes. This simple announcement, later called a "dramatic understatement" by the New York Times, immediately tore through the international media and grasped the attention of the world.[28] Adolf Eichmann was largely responsible for the implementation and brutal efficiency of Hitler's 'Final Solution' to the Jewish question. Witnesses at the Nuremburg trials claimed that Eichmann bragged about his role in exterminating the Jews, stating "I will leap into my grave laughing, because the feeling I have five million human beings on my conscience is for me a source of extraordinary satisfaction."[29] The bold and viciously committed Eichmann had even sent 27,000 Jews on a 125 mile forced march through snow covered mountain roads from Hungary to camps in Austria in late 1944. At the time, the Russians were quickly advancing through Hungary and the railways were either shut down or destroyed. The forced march was too much for most of the already emaciated and sickly Jewish prisoners and most did not survive. SS officers, acting on Eichmann's orders, killed all those that could not keep up or fell ill, including woman and children. Eichmann ordered this march, even after Reichsfuehrer Himmler ordered him to stop exterminating Jews in December 1944. Himmler knew the war would not end well for Germany and believed the remaining interned Jews could be used as a bargaining piece during negotiations with the Allies.[30] Eichmann, however, was committed to the efficient and total extermination of the Jews. There was no question in the

[28] Charles Ashman and Robert J. Wagman, *The Nazi Hunters* (New York: Pharos Books, 1988), 128–129.

[29] Ashman and Wagman, *The Nazi Hunters*, 129.

[30] Bascomb, *Hunting Eichmann,* 9–12.

Knesset (Israeli Parliament) about whether Eichmann should be tried; the only question was how he came into Israeli custody a full 15 years after the war.[31]

Prime minister Ben-Gurion, unlike President Obama in his speech to America after the UBL mission, offered no details regarding exactly how Eichmann came into Israeli custody. After Ben-Gurion's initial announcement, Israeli officials released an official explanation regarding the Eichmann capture; attributing the mission to independent Israeli patriots who tracked down and confronted Eichmann. The story may have been believable to some, except that it also claimed Eichmann voluntarily traveled with the Israeli Nazi hunters back to Israel in order to stand trial.[32] The secrets regarding Eichmann's apprehension, however, would not last long considering the tremendous international interest and intrigue regarding the capture of one of the "big three" Nazi war criminals.[33] By June of 1960, Israeli officials had privately admitted to their Argentine counterpart's responsibility for Eichmann's capture and asked if "the Argentine government will show understanding in the face of such historic and moral values."[34] Argentina chose to respond publicly to Israeli overtures for understanding by lodging a formal complaint with the United Nations on June 15th, 1960.

Isser Harel, chief of Israel's newly formed Mossad, was focused on Arab threats and gave little credence to another rumor about a living Nazi war criminal; however, Harel noted that Walter Eytan was usually a restrained and calm man, but the news of a potentially credible sighting of Eichmann, which included a physical address, had Eytan quite excited. Harel noted after listening to Eytan,

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[31] For a more detailed synopsis of Israeli efforts to locate Adolf Eichmann with a timeline of key events associated with the capture mission, see Thesis APPENDIX A.

[32] Ashman and Wagman, *The Nazi Hunters*, 131–132.

[33] Ashman and Wagman, *The Nazi Hunters*, 120: The "Big Three" refers to the three most notorious Nazi War Criminals that escaped Germany before the Nuremburg trials 1945 -1949. Dr. Joseph Mengele, Colonel Klaus Barbie "The butcher of Lyon," and Adolf Eichmann "the Architect of the Final Solution" were considered to be the most notorious Nazi War criminals to evade capture immediately after the war.

[34] Ashman and Wagman, *The Nazi Hunters*, 132.

"…I suspected something quite out of the ordinary was in the wind."[35] Fritz Bauer had also spoken with Attorney General Haim Cohen during his 1958 visit to Israel to meet with Walter Eytan and expressed his confidence in the veracity of his source's information. Harel, although still skeptical, was compelled to investigate the report further and knew that the first step was to speak with the source and confirm Eichmann's identity.

Harel demanded access to Bauer's source in Argentina and sent experienced agents with Spanish language skills to Argentina to confirm Eichmann's identify in January 1958. After following several leads and almost two years of careful clandestine investigations, agents attained two pictures of the man suspected to be Eichmann by using concealed cameras and posing as real estate investors searching for properties..

By December 1959, Harel obtained expert analysis of the grainy photographs and believed that Eichmann was indeed living in a Buenos Aires suburb.[36] Believing that extradition would result in Eichmann being warned by sympathetic local authorities, and knowing full well the moral and historic value of seeking justice against a man responsible for the near extinction of the Jewish people, David Ben-Gurion gave Harel the approval to capture Eichmann.[37] There was no cabinet meeting or internal debate, other than the simple discussion between the Prime Minister and his intelligence chief.

Harel did not have to convince Ben-Gurion that capturing Eichmann was the preferred course of action; recent history had already done that for him when West-Germany's request for Dr. Mengele's extradition in 1959 to the Argentinian government resulted in Mengele fleeing to Paraguay before he could be arrested. Mengele had actually applied for new German citizenship documents under his true name in 1956 through the German embassy in Buenos Aires. It took almost

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[35] Isser Harel, *The House on Garibaldi Street* (New York: Viking Press), 1–2.

[36] Harel, *The House on Garibaldi Street*, 51–68.

[37] Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 165.

three years for Hermann Langbein, a former medical clerk who had worked under Mengele and witnessed his horrific experiments on Jews in Auschwitz, to lead the legal effort to indict Mengele for murder in Germany. The German government had shown little interest in pursuing former Nazi's and it was rumored that someone in German State Prosecutor's office in Bonn tipped off the Mengele family about Langbein's efforts to seek an indictment. It is also noteworthy that Mengele was arrested in Buenos Aires for practicing medicine without a license three weeks prior to his indictment in Germany.[38] Regardless of Mengele's true reason for fleeing Argentina, the end result shaped Harel's recommendation and Ben-Gurion's decision to capture him versus seeking an extradition. Ironically, the Israeli and Argentine governments were working on an extradition agreement when Eichmann was captured, with both sides having signed the document only a few days before Ben-Gurion announced that Eichmann was in Israeli custody.

Harel was conflicted about the mission and took it with a sense of solemn obligation and gravity. Harel's moral conflict was not feigned. In 1974, Harel summarized the full measure of his internal conflict regarding the decision:

> Operation Eichmann had to be performed. The fact that it was necessary to take Eichmann out of Argentina caused us a deal of inner conflict. My mind was by no means easy about the need to carry out a clandestine action in the sovereign territory of a friendly country, and the question of whether it was permissible to do so—from both the ethical and political points of view – had to be faced in all its gravity.[39]

Although he felt conflicted, Harel clearly saw that the domestic social significance of trying Eichmann in a Jewish court far outweighed the international political risks. The deep sense of gravity with regard to the capture operation likely served to ensure the mission planning and supervision were careful, accurate and thorough. Nice point

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[38] Ashman and Wagman, *The Nazi Hunters*, 126–127

[39] Isser Harel, *The House on Garibaldi Street*, viii.

Due to the fact that the mission clearly violated international law and the sovereignty of a friendly nation, Harel decided that he must personally lead the mission and be accountable for its success or failure. Additionally, the team must be made up of volunteers. Of course Harel had no trouble finding volunteers, most of who were concentration camp survivors and therefore personally invested in the mission. Harel also ensured that his team understood the seriousness of the mission both tactically and strategically. Harel told his all-volunteer capture team, "it is sad that when we come to fulfill such a lofty national and moral mission, we must resort to force, and hurt a friendly state. We are not happy about this deed, but necessity knows no law."[40] Lastly, both Harel and Ben-Gurion decided to minimize the culpability of other government leaders, especially the Israeli Ambassador to Argentina, by not divulging the plan. This put the political consequences squarely on the Prime Minister's shoulders, while at the same time maximizing the required operational security needed for an operation of this magnitude.

Besides the real risks of the team being caught in the act, resulting in Eichmann escaping and a major embarrassing international incident with subsequent domestic political scandal ensuing from a botched covert action, there was also a real concern about Israel's obligation to the 300,000 Jews living in Argentina.[41] While Argentina certainly encouraged and even facilitated Nazi emigration to the country, mostly due to President Peron's fascist political platform and desire to reap the benefits of German scientific and military intellectual property, the Argentinians also embraced other refugee populations like the Jews.[42] Similarly, the U.S. and Great Britain shared Argentina's desire to acquire German intellectual property and focus on countering the scourge of

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[40] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 166.

[41] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews* 7.

[42] Tomas Eloy Martinez, Woodrow Wilson Center- Latin American Program.(Washington, DC: Wilson Center, 1984) *Peron and the Nazi War Criminals*, 6.

communism that was spreading across the globe.[43] Still, Ben-Gurion was legitimately concerned that the relations between the large Jewish diaspora in Argentina and the Argentinian government would be harmed as a consequence of the Eichmann operation. This fear, however, was later proven to be unfounded since Argentina was interested in garnering U.S. financial aid and military support and the Jewish population in Argentina was well connected with their politically influential counterparts in the U.S.

C. THE MISSION

By February 1960 a small Mossad team arrived in Buenos Aires to locate, and capture Eichmann. The personnel assigned to locate Eichmann were posing as real estate investors, seeking a vacant property in Eichmann's neighborhood. By early April 1960 the reconnaissance of Eichmann was complete, and the team knew his daily routine and planned to grab him as he stepped off the evening bus, returning from work, and walked approximately 200 meters to his small house on Garibaldi Street in the San Fernando suburb of Buenos Aires. From there, Eichmann was to be brought to a safe house in Buenos Aires, undergo a thorough medical examination and interrogation to confirm his true identity, and wait with the team until he could be transported back to Israel on an El Al Airliner. Harel had brokered a deal with the operations manager of El Al, also a concentration camp survivor, and secured the use of one airliner. The jet would carry Mossad agents, posing as airline attendants and be arriving in Buenos Aires to deliver the Israeli delegation to the Argentina's 150th anniversary celebration.

The operation went as planned, and on the evening of May 20th, 1960, an El Al airliner took off from Buenos Aires with an exhausted yet elated team of Mossad agents and drugged and incoherent, yet very much alive, Adolf Eichmann. The plane landed in Tel Aviv the next morning. Two days later, Ben-

[43] Martinez, *Peron and the Nazi War Criminals*, 14.

Gurion announced to the Knesset and to the world that Eichmann was in custody and would be tried for his crimes against the Jewish people and humanity.

D. POST-FACTO RESPONSES

In his announcement to the Knesset, Ben-Gurion never said where Eichmann was found. Immediately following the public announcement, the Israeli government spread rumors through informal channels that Eichmann had been located in a near-by Arab country.[44] This propaganda campaign intended to build on the well-known fact that Egypt was employing several German scientists, including some former Nazi's. The attempts to mislead both the domestic and international public, however, did not work and by the end of May, Time Magazine reported that Eichmann was captured in Argentina. One Buenos Aires newspaper even praised the Israeli security services for their professional work in capturing Eichmann without incident.[45] The Israeli minister, Abba Eban, attending the Argentinian 150th anniversary independence celebration was still in Argentina when the local press started reporting on the incident. Eban was forced to hold an impromptu press conference in Buenos Aires and honestly stated: " I know nothing about it" to the local media. This answer, however, did little to quell the outrage of the Argentinian government. The Argentine foreign minister, Diogenes Tabodoa, confronted the Israeli Ambassador, Arye Levavi, and after receiving responses similar to those of Eban, stated: "If Eichmann was captured in Argentina, that is a contrary to international norms and will compel Argentina, despite its good relations with Israel, to register a most serious protest, with unforeseeable consequences."[46] The Israeli officials in Buenos Aires were unable to dampen the animosity over the affair. Ambassador Levavi was especially concerned that the political backlash inside Argentina would weaken the current regime and force them to break-off all diplomatic ties with

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[44] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 174.

[45] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 175.

[46] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews* , 175.

Israel in order to save face domestically and mitigate their own apparent lack of control. Levavi advised the Israeli foreign ministry:

In my view there is an almost certain danger that the Argentine government, weak and beleaguered by the opposition, will be forced to cease diplomatic relations with us if we do not deny the Eichmann kidnapping here. Such a denial will balance the situation, and slowly the good tenor of relations that prevailed in the past will return. A break in diplomatic relations with us will be a fatal blow to the local Jews and to their actions on behalf of Israel, and will undermine our position throughout Latin America for a long time.[47]

Ambassador Levavi likely felt slighted by his exclusion from the Eichmann mission and, in hind sight, overstated the negative long-term consequences of action. Still, the immediate impact to Israeli-Argentine relations was severe. Argentina of course demanded that Eichmann be returned to their custody and the perpetrators, whom Israel claimed to be Jewish citizens acting independently, be punished. The blowback for local Jews was noticeable with a surge in street violence, some of it targeted against local Jews in Buenos Aires suspected of supporting the mission.[48]

In order to further calm the situation, Ben-Gurion wrote a personal letter to Argentine President Frondizi, expressing his sincere regret for violating Argentina's national sovereignty, but also stating that the issue was an "inner moral imperative" for Israel and an "act of supreme historic justice."[49] Frondizi, while personally understanding the Israeli motivations, was caught in a domestic fight with right wing elements in his own government , especially the foreign ministry and still Nazi sympathetic catholic church. The radical faction Union Civica Radical del Pueblo was using the situation to discredit the President, while

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[47] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews,* 176.

[48] Uki Goni, *The Real Odessa: How Peron Brought the Nazi War Criminals to Argentina* (London: Granta Books, 2001), 318.

[49] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 178.

influential catholic leaders in Argentina, such as Cardinal Antonio Caggiano, made statements such as:

The man had come to our country in search of forgiveness and oblivion, and it does not matter what his name is, Ricardo Clement or Adolf Eichmann; our obligation as Christians is to forgive what he has done.[50]

A few weeks after the cardinal's statements, the Argentine government filed a formal protest with the United Nations Security Council, and sent Mario Amadeo, a former foreign minister and prominent catholic. Amadeo made his argument to the security council, stating "Argentina was always generous in opening its doors to refugees from all over the world: this policy permitted Adolf Eichmann to enter the country fraudulently, in the same way that many Jews did."[51] The Argentine delegation made little headway in gaining any tangible action from the UN Security Council. The Council did hold a meeting about the violation and condemned Israel's actions and ordered Israel to give Argentina "appropriate reparations." The resolution passed with two amendments, drafted by the U.S., stating that the Security Council was "mindful of the universal condemnation of the persecution of the Jews under the Nazis and of the concern of people in all countries that Eichmann be brought to appropriate justice for the crimes of which he is accused."[52] The second amendment called for the "advancement" of friendly relations between Argentina and Israel.[53] Essentially, the UN remained neutral toward the entire affair with the lack of real action favoring Israel's position.

Israel's public response to the UN assembly, offered by Golda Meir, continued to claim that private Israeli citizens, acting alone and on their own conscience, captured Eichmann. Golda Meir apologized for the actions of those

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[50] Martinez, *Peron and the Nazi War Criminals* 14.

[51] Martinez, *Peron and the Nazi War Criminals* 14.

[52] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 183.

[53] Ibid.

citizens in violating Argentina's sovereignty, but expressed her belief that in the context of the "horror of the Nazis' extermination of six million Jews," Eichmann's kidnapping should be accepted and he be brought to justice.

The Security Council resolution, while a public condemnation of the act, was essentially a victory for Israel and further infuriated right-wing elements in the Argentina, especially those in the foreign ministry. President Frondizi was compelled to act publically and declared the Israeli Ambassador in Buenos Aires "persona non-grata" in July 1960. This act, however, was the most Frondizi was willing to do and he would later state that "it was all staged" and intended to preserve his image at home.[54] Whether staged or not, the decree to oust the Israeli Ambassador served to frustrate Israel-Argentine relations even further and caused Israel to seek the support of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Wilcox. Before Secretary Wilcox could react, U.S. diplomats in Buenos Aires met their Argentine counterparts and relayed the message to Israel that the expulsion of the ambassador was "enough of a gesture" to satisfy public dissent in Argentina.[55] In August 1960, the situation normalized and Israel sent a new Ambassador to Buenos Aires.

E. CONCLUSION

Operation Eichmann represents a national goal with the highest degree of moral justification. While the choice to achieve that national goal through covert action can be contested, Israeli leaders did not debate the moral imperative associated with seeking justice against a man so deeply culpable for the near extermination of the entire Jewish race. With regard to domestic political risk, Ben-Gurion's government faced far greater risk in not acting on a probably credible report on Eichmann's whereabouts than from a covert attempt to capture him. The recent Kastner trial along with Kastner's assassination in 1957 and public acquittal by Attorney General Cohen in 1958 had propelled Eichmann's

[54] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 186.

[55] Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 187.

name once again to the top of the list of iconic evil figures amongst a population that was still recovering from the horrors of the holocaust. It is not unreasonable to assume that Fritz Bauer or some other personally affected Jew would eventually divulge the Eichmann report to the Israeli public if it failed to gain any serious consideration in the government. While Harel does not mention Bauer's indignation over the apparent lack of Israel action on Lothar Hermann's report about Eichmann in 1957, some accounts of Bauer's 1959 trip to Israel to meet with the foreign minister and attorney general paint the picture of a frustrated man looking for action.[56]

In regard to domestic opinion, it would appear that Fearon's notion of audience costs played a part in the Israeli decision to act covertly. Subsequently, the Argentine response to Israel was also driven largely by domestic concerns and a government bitterly fractured between the moderate President Frondizi and the fascist influenced foreign ministry that enjoyed the support of influential Argentine Catholic leaders. Israel either underestimated the influence of right-wing elements of the Argentine government or hoped that public saber-rattling could be easily side-stepped through discrete diplomatic communications. Ranaan Rein's description of the communication error between the states seems accurate:

The Israeli public was completely baffled and occasionally astounded by Argentina's adamant position throughout most of the crisis, apparently for two reasons. First, throughout the crisis Buenos Aires and Jerusalem dealt with the affair in completely different ways. Whereas Israel preferred a covert diplomacy, the Argentine authorities hurried to publish every diplomatic proceeding, whether for propaganda or because of leaks resulting from internal dissension and nationalist pressure…. Second, the centrality of the Holocaust in the Israeli

[56] Hanna Yablonka, *State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann*, 15–16.

national consciousness made it difficult for many to grasp the possibility of a different perspective on the Eichmann affair.[57]

Regardless of Israel's miscalculation of the probable Argentine responses, the decision to capture Adolf Eichmann through covert action instead of seeking extradition, was in light of the circumstances and recent history with high profile war criminals in Latin America, a prudent one. Prime Minister Ben-Gurion had every reason to believe that a request to extradite Eichmann, even with a near complete extradition treaty, had a high probability of resulting in Eichmann being tipped by sympathetic expatriate Germans or even right-wing elements in the Argentine Government. In this regard, the decision not to include the Israeli Ambassador to Argentina in planning the mission and post-mission response seems to have been a mistake. The Israeli Ambassador's knowledge of Argentina's key leaders, their political views, and the local social dynamics would have likely aided Ben-Gurion in better shaping the Israeli response to Argentina after the truth about the nature of the operation was discovered or surmised in the media.

PM Ben-Gurion fared far better in calculating Israeli domestic support for Eichmann's capture. Peter Malkin, one of the Mossad agents that captured Eichmann, later wrote a book about his exploits and noted the overwhelming public support:

On our return, Israel was still in an uproar. The reaction to the capture had far exceeded even my wildest imaginings; there was nothing less than an explosion of national pride. It dominated the headlines, the airwaves, casual conversations. Flags and banners were everywhere. *We had struck back!* ran the unspoken theme. *For the first time since the days of the Old Testament, we had risen in righteous fury!*[58]

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57 Ranaan Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 185.

58 Malkin and Stein, *Eichmann in My Hands*, 249.

Peter Malkin was a Holocaust survivor whose sister, Fruma, died in a Nazi concentration camp. Many Jews alive in 1960, both inside Israel and abroad, had been deeply personally affected by the holocaust. In one single bold act, Ben-Gurion was able to turn the collective emotional scar left by the holocaust into a nationalistic badge of honor for Israeli Jews. The Eichmann capture and subsequent trial and conviction served to further the development of a distinct Israeli national identity and solidify Ben-Gurion's political strength.

The fact that Fritz Bauer chose to travel to Israel with his information was a testament to his belief that West Germany also had little appetite for hunting Nazis and a vote of confidence that Israel did have an appetite for seeking justice. Dr. Bauer, as a prosecutor in the German Attorney General's office, was well qualified to assess his government's true desire for prosecuting Nazi's. Fritz Bauer told Dr. Shinar, "I don't know if we can altogether rely on the German judiciary here, let alone the German embassy staff in Buenos Aires….I see no other way but to turn to you."[59] Fritz Bauer went on to express his confidence in Israel's ability to find Eichmann as well as his belief that Israel had the greatest stake in the matter. Bauer's statements were both a vote of confidence for Israel's capability and justification, but also a warning regarding the risk of trying to pursue Eichmann through bilateral legal relationships with West Germany. Bauer's position on the matter helped to shape the Israeli course of action.

The risk of any military conflict with Argentina, considering the vast distances between the two nations and Argentina's poor military capability, was as insignificant as the "international condemnation" for violating Argentina's sovereignty that was eloquently captured in the UN Security Council resolution. The fear that Israel would hurt the relative societal position of the almost 300,000 Jews living in Argentina also proved to be a myth. That fear was likely born form a deep sense of Israeli regional isolation after the 1956 Arab-Israeli war and Israeli's deep sense of obligation to Jewish enclaves around the world, many of

[59] Isser Harel, *The House on Garibaldi Street*, 4.

which were similarly comprised of holocaust survivors. Neither Ben-Gurion, nor Harel calculated that the Jewish lobby in the U.S. would play a role in compelling U.S. diplomats to mediate a resolution. Had Ben-Gurion better understood the relationships between Argentina, the U.S government and the Jewish enclaves in each location, he might have sought U.S. support for the covert action or even a more organized and deliberate mediation effort with Argentina immediately after the mission. While Operation Eichmann does not characterize the risk considerations of all covert actions, it does highlight the importance of a moral justification at least to the actors own domestic constituency. Additionally, the operation highlights the importance of understanding the domestic situation for all of the affected nations and considering that in war-gaming the possible response scenarios and optimal means to resolve the ensuing crisis.

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III. WRATH OF GOD

A. DISCUSSION

On the morning of 5 September 1972, eight members of the Black September Organization (BSO), a little known group of Palestinian extremists, entered the athletes' housing block of the Olympic village in Munich. Within 45 minutes, two members of the Israeli Olympic team were dead and nine more were hostages. BSO demanded the release of 234 Palestinians and two Germans held in Israeli and German prisons. By midnight on 5 September, all of the remaining hostages and five of the BSO members had been killed during a botched rescue attempt by inept German border police. Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir determined that the Israeli athletes must be avenged and the Israeli government needed to send a message to the PLO that would deter future attacks against Israeli citizens abroad.

The Israeli response to the Munich massacre was called 'Operation Wrath of God' and it began in earnest in October 1972. The operation, however, was strategically misguided. While public demand for retribution was visceral back in Israel, the government sanctioned an assassination campaign that failed to provide the Israeli public with a satisfactory display of retribution since the visible political heads of the PLO were purposely not targeted. The fact that Israel conducted public assassinations in Europe, far from its own borders and the heart of the Palestinian conflict, and that the initial targets selected were of questionable association with any terror activity, served to further obfuscate the goal of retribution against the BSO and its masters in the PLO. Israeli leaders also chose to conduct covert actions, as opposed to military strikes against PLO strongholds in Lebanon, thus preventing the Israeli government from claiming any responsibility for tactical successes against terrorist targets in Europe.

Only after the debacle in Lillehammer, Norway when a Mossad team killed an innocent Moroccan immigrant and was subsequently arrested by local police was Israeli government sponsorship for the targeted killings fully exposed.

Additionally, the assassination campaign had no deterrent effect and, arguably, escalated the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Some historians, such as Samuel Katz, also argue that Israel's collective pre-occupation with revenge for the Munich massacre lead to a singular focus in targeting the militant arm of the PLO and therefore took intelligence resources away from the larger regional conflicts with Egypt and Syria. According to Katz, the obsession with vengeance for Munich contributed to Israel being completely surprised on October 6th 1973 at the outside of the Yom Kippur War.[60] Regardless of whether Operation Wrath of God contributed to the intelligence failure in predicting the Yom Kippur War, the operation culminated with the debacle at Lillehammer, Norway and is known as the "Michdal" (Hebrew for non-performance or neglect) amongst Israeli security officials.[61] The capture of Mossad agents in Lillehammer was a direct result of poor decisions made by Mossad leadership and stands as a testament to the sense of over-confidence and poor assessments of potential strategic effects of covert actions that plagued the Wrath of God operation in spite of any tactical successes.

This chapter will analyze the decisions made by Israeli leaders prior to and throughout Operation Wrath of God and compare the stated goals of the operation with the results. First, the strategic context will be outlined. The massacre at the Munich Olympics and the events afterward must be viewed in the greater context of the Arab-Israeli struggle that began with the Zionist movement in Palestine after WWI when the entire region was under British control as a result of the implementation of the 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement[62]. The violent conflict for land and influence in Palestine began under the British mandate, but evolved into a regional conflict with neighboring Arab states after Israeli independence from Britain in 1948. During the earlier stages of the struggle for control over Palestine, the Jews proved to be significantly more

60 Katz, *Guards Without Borders,* 49–50.

61 Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 47.

62 Geoffrey Regan, *Israel and the Arabs* (Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Press, 1984), 7.

organized and operated with a greater sense of unity of purpose, giving them a distinct advantage over their Arab neighbors. As the struggle continued, an innovative and well-organized Palestinian threat evolved under Yassir Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The threat of effective organized violence from PLO forces, backed by Arab governments in the region, reached its height between 1968 and 1973. .

After the strategic context and the critical events that led up to the Munich attack are outlined, the remainder of the chapter will discuss the cycle of violence between Israel and the PLO and its agents that continued after Munich and culminated with the Yom Kippur War in October 1973. The chapter will focus on the four key Israeli missions under Operation Wrath of God that set the tone for the overall operation and were crucial benchmarks to measure the success of the operation. The first two missions to kill Wael Zwaiter in Rome and Dr. Hamshari in Paris are discussed as they represent a mismatch of the strategic goal of retribution. Neither target was directly tied to Munich or significantly tied to any terror activity, at least not in a public enough manner to fulfill any strategic communication goal with the people of Israel. The third mission, Operation Spring of Youth, appears to have been the most successful in striking PLO operational leadership and was conducted in Beirut at the heart of the conflict between Israel and the PLO. Spring of Youth seemed to fulfill the strategic goals of justice from acts of retribution, deterrence, and prevention of terror attacks. The last mission in Lillehammer, Norway in July 1973 was both a strategic and tactical failure and essentially ended Operation Wrath of God. Lastly, the chapter will compare the results of Operation Wrath of God with the its goals and evaluate whether the goals were met and if not, why?

B. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Operation Wrath of God can be viewed as one episode in the Arab-Israeli struggle for control in Palestine that began with the fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War 1. While the conflict has evolved significantly and continues today, for the purposes of this thesis, the relevant strategic context began with

the British mandate in 1918 and ended with the onset of the Yom Kippur War between Israel and the combined forces of Egypt and Syria on October 6th, 1973. The period between 1918 and 1973 can be broken into three logical phases: British Mandate from 1918 to Israeli independence in 1948. During the mandate period, both the Jewish and Arab constituents under British authority organized politically and militarily as the competition for land and influence polarized the conflict. The second phase of the conflict began after Israeli independence in 1948 and continued through the 1967 “6 Day War.” During the second phase, the conflict evolved into a regional struggle, played out through a sense of Arab solidarity with the displaced Palestinians, but essentially as a state struggle between Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon on one side and Israel on the other. During this phase, the PLO was established (in 1964) and acted as an unofficial proxy for the Arab states opposed to Israel. The third phase of the conflict began after Israel seized significant portions of the Golan Heights, Gaza strip and West Bank during the 6 Day War and retained those lands to create a larger security zone and buffer against its violent neighbors. During this phase, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced and the conflict between Israel and the PLO escalated and spread through Europe, Asia and Africa.

The timeline in Figure 2 establishes the approximate period during which the violent struggle between Palestinian Arabs and Israelis evolved.

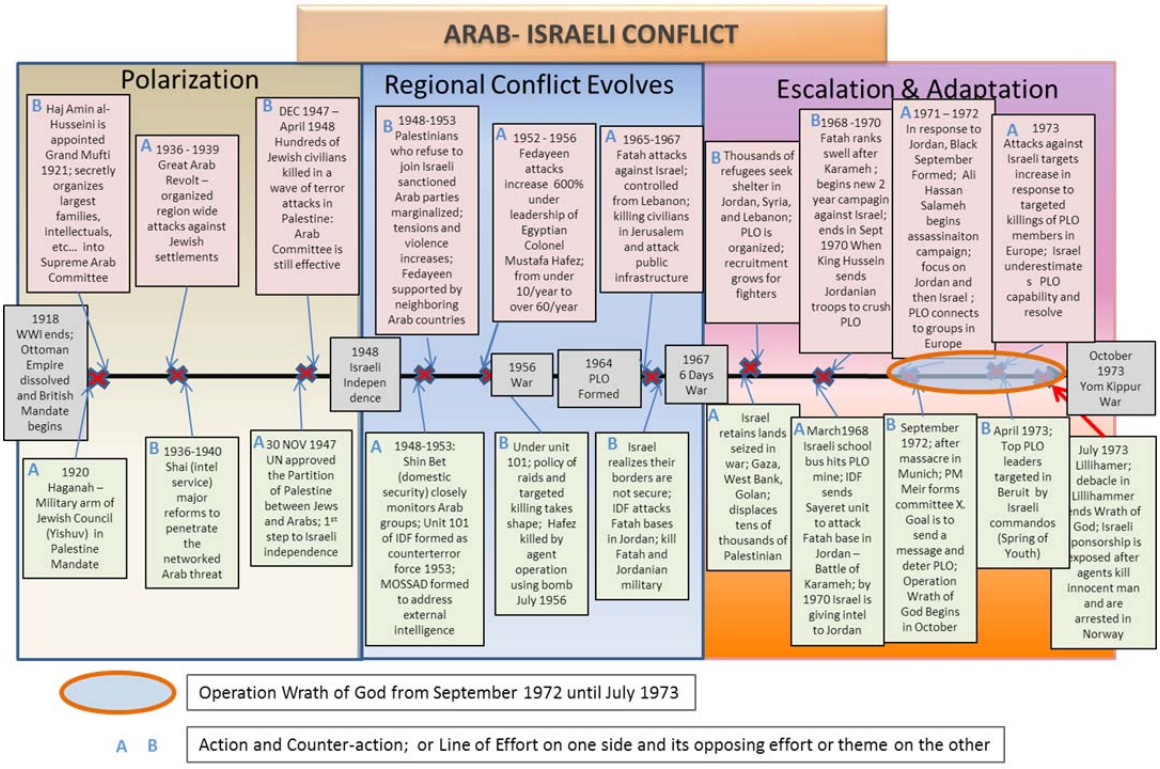
ARAB- ISRAELI CONFLICT
Polarization
Regional Conflict Evolves
Escalation & Adaptation
B Haj Amin al-Husseini is appointed Grand Mufti 1921; secretly organizes largest families, intellectuals, etc... into Supreme Arab Committee
A 1936 - 1939 Great Arab Revolt – organized region wide attacks against Jewish settlements
B DEC 1947 – April 1948 Hundreds of Jewish civilians killed in a wave of terror attacks in Palestine: Arab Committee is still effective
B 1948-1953 Palestinians who refuse to join Israeli sanctioned Arab parties marginalized; tensions and violence increases; Fedayeen supported by neighboring Arab countries
A 1952 - 1956 Fedayeen attacks increase 600% under leadership of Egyptian Colonel Mustafa Hafez; from under 10/year to over 60/year
A 1965-1967 Fatah attacks against Israel; controlled from Lebanon; killing civilians in Jerusalem and attack public infrastructure
B Thousands of refugees seek shelter in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon; PLO is organized; recruitment grows for fighters
B1968 -1970 Fatah ranks swell after Karameh ; begins new 2 year campagin against Israel; ends in Sept 1970 When King Hussein sends Jordanian troops to crush PLO
A 1971 – 1972 In response to Jordan, Black September Formed; Ali Hassan Salameh begins assassinaiton campaign; focus on Jordan and then Israel ; PLO connects to groups in Europe
A 1973 Attacks against Israeli targets increase in response to targeted killings of PLO members in Europe; Israel underestimates PLO capability and resolve
1918 WWI ends; Ottoman Empire dissolved and British Mandate begins
1948 Israeli Indepen dence
1956 War
1964 PLO Formed
1967 6 Days War
October 1973 Yom Kippur War
A 1920 Haganah – Military arm of Jewish Council (Yishuv) in Palestine Mandate
B 1936-1940 Shai (intel service) major reforms to penetrate the networked Arab threat
A 30 NOV 1947 UN approved the Partition of Palestine between Jews and Arabs; 1st step to Israeli independence
A 1948-1953: Shin Bet (domestic security) closely monitors Arab groups; Unit 101 of IDF formed as counterterror force 1953; MOSSAD formed to address external intelligence
B Under unit 101; policy of raids and targeted killing takes shape; Hafez killed by agent operation using bomb July 1956
B Israel realizes their borders are not secure; IDF attacks Fatah bases in Jordan; kill Fatah and Jordanian military
A Israel retains lands seized in war; Gaza, West Bank, Golan; displaces tens of thousands of Palestinian
A March1968 Israeli school bus hits PLO mine; IDF sends Sayeret unit to attack Fatah base in Jordan – Battle of Karameh; by 1970 Israel is giving intel to Jordan
B September 1972; after massacre in Munich; PM Meir forms committee X. Goal is to send a message and deter PLO; Operation Wrath of God Begins in October
B April 1973; Top PLO leaders targeted in Beruit by Israeli commandos (Spring of Youth)
July 1973 Lillihamer; debacle in Lillihammer ends Wrath of God; Israeli sponsorship is exposed after agents kill innocent man and are arrested in Norway
Operation Wrath of God from September 1972 until July 1973
A B
Action and Counter-action; or Line of Effort on one side and its opposing effort or theme on the other

Figure 2. Arab-Israeli Conflict 1918-1973

The first phase of the Arab-Israeli conflict can be viewed as a period of polarization between the Jewish population and the Palestinian Arabs during the British mandate from 1918 to 1948. The second phase begins with the defacto establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948 after Jewish forces defeated Palestinian Arabs in a struggle for control of the former British mandate. During the second phase of the conflict, the disenfranchised Palestinians were clustered along the borders of Israel and neighboring Arab states. Palestinians found refuge, resources and training from their Arab brothers and a wider regional conflict evolved between Israel and the Arabs. This conflict culminated with the overwhelming Israeli victory during the Six-Day War in 1967. The third phase of the conflict began in the aftermath of the 6 days War as thousands of Palestinians were forced in refugee camps and Palestinian leaders from various factions struggled internally to lead the armed and emerging political struggle against Israel on behalf of the Palestinian people. This phase of the struggle saw

an escalation of Palestinian terror style attacks aimed at exploiting the media and capitalizing propaganda effects to generate world-wide awareness about the Palestinian cause. Israel responded in kind, and spectacular violence between the two sides escalated. Arab states continued to support and use the Palestinian struggle for their own purposes, however, their ability to truly exert control over the Palestinian diaspora waned as Yassir Arafat rose to head of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The third phase culminated with the Yom Kippur War in October 1973 when the combined forces of Egypt, Syria and a token PLO contingent attacked Israel, taking them completely by surprise. Israel won the brief war, but at significantly greater cost in lives and material than six years prior.[63]

C. WRATH OF GOD TIMELINE

The timeline in Figure 3 shows the Israeli actions taken as part of Wrath of God (tan shaded boxes below the line).

[63] For a detailed description of each phase of the Arab-Israeli struggle see APPENDIX B.

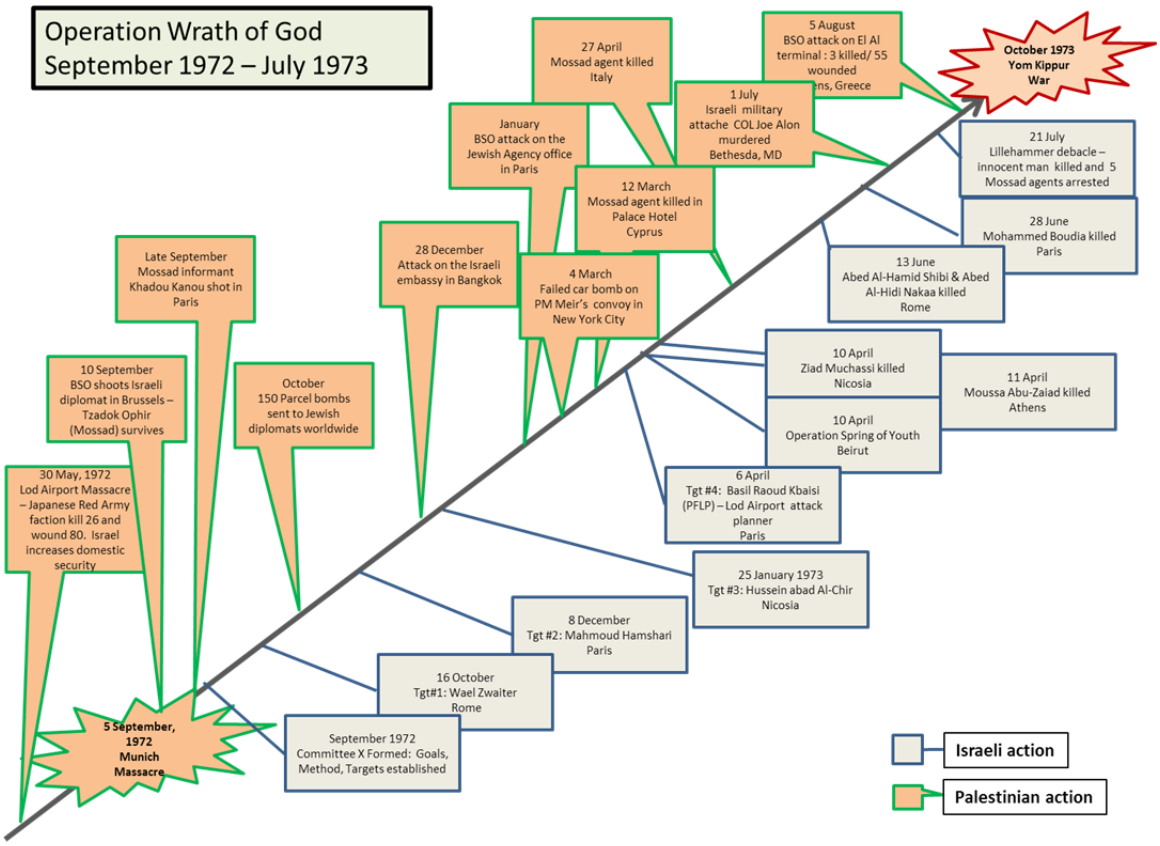
Operation Wrath of God
September 1972 – July 1973
30 May, 1972
Lod Airport Massacre – Japanese Red Army faction kill 26 and wound 80. Israel increases domestic security
10 September
BSO shoots Israeli diplomat in Brussels – Tzadok Ophir (Mossad) survives
Late September
Mossad informant Khadou Kanou shot in Paris
October
150 Parcel bombs sent to Jewish diplomats worldwide
28 December
Attack on the Israeli embassy in Bangkok
January
BSO attack on the Jewish Agency office in Paris
27 April
Mossad agent killed Italy
4 March
Failed car bomb on PM Meir's convoy in New York City
12 March
Mossad agent killed in Palace Hotel Cyprus
1 July
Israeli military attache COL Joe Alon murdered Bethesda, MD
5 August
BSO attack on El Al terminal : 3 killed/ 55 wounded
October 1973
Yom Kippur War
21 July
Lillehammer debacle – innocent man killed and 5 Mossad agents arrested
28 June
Mohammed Boudia killed Paris
13 June
Abed Al-Hamid Shibi & Abed Al-Hidi Nakaa killed Rome
10 April
Ziad Muchassi killed Nicosia
10 April
Operation Spring of Youth Beirut
11 April
Moussa Abu-Zaiad killed Athens
6 April
Tgt #4: Basil Raoud Kbaisi (PFLP) – Lod Airport attack planner Paris
25 January 1973
Tgt #3: Hussein abad Al-Chir Nicosia
8 December
Tgt #2: Mahmoud Hamshari Paris
16 October
Tgt#1: Wael Zwaiter Rome
September 1972
Committee X Formed: Goals, Method, Targets established
5 September, 1972
Munich Massacre
Israeli action
Palestinian action

Figure 3. Wrath of God Timeline

The timeline begins with the May 1972 attack at Ben-Gurion airport in Lod. This is due to the fact that Lod represented a shift in the PLO approach to fighting Israel. For the first time, the PLO collaborated with foreign extremists and targeted civilians directly in order to exploit the media and incite fear rather than target official Israeli figures or installations. Prior to Lod the PFLP had conducted several aircraft hijacking in order to broker the release of Palestinian prisoners, but Israel began a sky marshal program and installed X-ray machines at luggage check-ins to increase security on their flights, forcing the PLO to adapt their tactics. Lod was a huge boost to PLO recruiting and morale and foreshadowed the next more spectacular attack in Munich. While Lod was collaboration with the Japanese Red Army on Israeli soil, Munich was collaboration with the Baader-

Meinhof leftist group on foreign soil. The only non-Palestinians on the hostage takers prisoner release demand were two members of the Meinhof gang.

The Israeli actions taken as part of the larger counter-guerilla efforts in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon and inside Israeli occupied territories are not listed; however it is important to keep in mind that Palestinian attacks against Israel and Israeli attacks against suspected militants continued in the region. The active regional conflict between Israeli forces and Palestinian para-militaries produced far more casualties and kinetic damage than the clandestine operations. Wrath of God represented another front in the Arab-Israeli conflict and is often referred to as the "War of Spooks."[64] The Palestinian actions are listed in the orange boxes to the left/above the timeline. While not listed on the timeline since it did not target Israel, the March 8, 1973 attack by BSO on the Saudi Embassy in Khartoum was one of the most infamous BSO attacks from a western perspective.

During the attack two U.S. Ambassadors and a Belgian diplomat were killed. Yezid Sayigh proposes that the backlash from this attack, more than any other single event, convinced Yasir Arafat to seek greater control over his militant factions and end the spectacular terror campaign outside of the Middle East.[65] The timeline ends with the onset of the Yom Kippur war in October 1973. While the war did not resolve the Palestinian issue, the Israeli focus returned to the regional conflict against para-military forces and militias in the occupied territories. At the same time, the PLO emerged from the 1973 war as a more cohesive and unified entity than ever before. Arafat's efforts to tighten control were taking shape and he sought to pursue more traditional political and military pressure to gain control of the occupied territories instead of extra-regional terror attacks.[66]

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[64] Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 31.

[65] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State,* 311.

[66] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 329–330.

D. MISSION

The Munich massacre represented a huge lapse in security with respect to the Israeli government. The Israeli security services were completely surprised by the BSO attack, which had been planned several months in advance. The fact that Palestinian militants were able to plan, train for, and then execute such a sophisticated hostage event without any Israeli intelligence service knowing was a complete shock to Israel. Aaron Klein described the Munich attack as a "dividing line, separating history into 'before Munich' and 'after Munich'.[67] Israeli public confidence in the government and the Labor party, which Prime Minister Golda Meir represented, was shaken.

Most notably, the Mossad chief Zvi Zamir had traveled to Germany during the Munich crisis in an attempt to convince the German government to allow the Israeli counterterror force, the Sayaret (Unit), to conduct a hostage rescue. Zamir failed to convince the Germans and the result was an absolutely botched attempt, by untrained German police, to conduct a high risk hostage rescue that, if conducted by a nation today, would only be conducted by the most elite counter-terror units.[68] On 6 September, Zvi Zamir returned to Israel and within an hour after landing was in a cabinet meeting with PM Meir, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and the Deputy Prime Minister for Education, Culture and Sports. Emotions ran high as Zvi Zamir recounted his experience from the last 24 hours:

> The ministers were livid. A response was necessary. But many were frustrated: Who will we retaliate against? Who will we hit? Who are the commanding officers of the Black September group? Do they even have bases? By the meeting's end they had decided on the air strikes and the subsequent ground assault [against known PLO camps in Lebanon], but all present recognized the need to go beyond the standard retaliatory script.69

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67 Klein, *Striking Back,* 92.

68 Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, 270–272.

69 Klein, *Striking Back*, 95.

The political pressures were palpable for PM Meir's government. PM Meir tried to avoid engaging her opponents in the Knesset on the subject of internal inquiries and investigations to answer why the attack had been a complete surprise. The Israeli government, and particularly the Mossad, had been embarrassed by the fact that their athletes had been such easy targets and the Israeli public was losing confidence that their current government could keep the population safe in Europe. In less than a week after the Munich incident, two more Israeli citizens were killed in letter bombs in Brussels and London.[70] From a domestic perspective in Israel, the world had turned upside down, and the previously local-regional conflict between the displaced Palestinian diaspora and the government of Israel had spilled into Western Europe, an area that had previously been seen as safe by members of either side. The government seemed paralyzed and ineffective in the Israeli public view immediately following Munich. The Prime Minister ordered a cursory investigation later known as the Koppel Commission and as a result she fired 3 officials after the incident.[71] The report was vague and of little real value in identifying any institutional that accounted for Munich. Essentially, the Koppel report was an attempt to satisfy a measure of public outrage and political opposition with a few low-level scapegoats. PM Meir was not actually interested in blame or infighting that would surely weaken the government.

Instead, PM Meir attempted to unify and rally the political and domestic populace with rousing speeches and prophetic statements about Israel's moral obligation to fight terrorism:

> The actions and ways of the terrorists are continually evolving. It is our duty to prepare ourselves for this type of war, more than we have been to this day – methodically, knowledgeably, decisively, and expansively; this a dangerous and critical task. From the blood-drenched history of the Jewish nation, we learn that violence which

[70] Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, 271.

[71] Ibid.

> begins with the murder of Jews ends with the spread of violence and danger to all people, in all nations.[72]

While PM Meir certainly believed it was her solemn duty to avenge the deaths of athletes, it is also likely that she wanted to capitalize on and focus the public's attention on the path ahead and garner support for any Israeli actions taken in response to Munich while avoiding internal squabbling that could be used to fracture her control. In the same September 12th speech to the Knesset, PM Meir would close saying "We have no choice but to strike at terrorist organizations wherever we can reach them. That is our obligation to ourselves and to peace. We shall fulfill that obligation undauntedly."[73]

PM Meir still had to play the politics of Israel, which at that time evolved around the Palestinian issue. The right-wing opposition leader of the Herut party, Menachem Begin, denounced PM Meir's statement and demanded an official committee of inquiry be established to find those whose negligence allowed the events at Munich to unfold without any warning. Similar responses came from Knesset members on the far left as well.[74] The one notion that earned consensus in the Knesset was that the typical retaliatory strikes into Syria and Lebanon would not suffice. Even Menachem Begin called for "a prolonged, open-ended assault against the murderers and their bases," and stated further "we must stifle all of their plans and operations, and snuff out the existence of these murderous organizations…..We need to run these criminals and murderers off the face of the earth, to render them fearful, no longer able to initiate violence. If we need a special unit to do this, then now is the time to build it."[75] Regardless of why the Israelis failed to predict the attacks at Munich, PM Meir had carte blanch support across the government to act decisively and arguably had no choice if she wanted to maintain control over her government and any measure

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[72] Klein, *Striking Back*, 100.

[73] Klein, *Striking Back*, 101.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Klein, *Striking Back* , 102.

of popular support. PM Meir immediately appointed retired Major General Aharon Yariv as the new prime minister on terrorism and tasked him to draft a new counter-terror strategy with Mossad chief Zvi Zamir.

The plan took only a couple of weeks to develop and focused foremost on prevention of future attacks and secondly on deterrence of current terrorist and their support network. Both the prevention and deterrence aspects were tied to the notion that very bold and public assassinations would create an increased costs perception for current PLO members and further deter prospective recruits from joining.[76] Additionally, only operational members of the BSO or Fatah were to be targeted as this would have the greatest impact on reducing the PLO's militant capabilities and thwarting future attacks. Besides deterrence, the assassinations would also serve to fulfill the need for prophetic justice that PM Meir believed was woven into the national identity of a people who survived the holocaust. The fact that the massacre of Israelis happened once again on German soil while many in Israel could still remember the holocaust added a great deal more value to notion of justice based on Hamarabi's code.[77]

Key Israeli government officials could not agree on how to respond to the incident. Abba Eban, the foreign minister, stated that the Israeli response should be constrained to the Middle East; however, several other current and former government officials saw the need to fight terrorism in Europe, since that was where Israeli's were at the most risk. Amihai Paglin, the former operations chief of the Irgun (the pre-independence Israeli paramilitary force), was arrested at the end of September 1972 for smuggling weapons and explosives intended for use against Arabs in Europe.[78] Israeli public opinion was leaning heavily toward revenge in a European battleground and the Israeli Prime Minister's office was

[76] Klein, *Striking Back*, 106.

[77] Jonas, *Vengeance*, XVII. Hamarabi's code is referenced by Jonas as one of the cultural norms in Israel since it is the basis of the Old Testament notion of justice referred to as "an eye for an eye" in the Book of Exodus, Ch24:24.

[78] Jonas, *Vengeance*, 271.

listening. The fact that BSO continued to target Israeli officials and offices in Europe throughout the month of September 1972 also helped to influence the focus of retaliatory efforts toward BSO and later the PLO at large in Europe.

Only five days after the Munich attack, a Mossad agent was shot during a meeting with his informant in Brussels. The BSO knew that Israel would be hungry for any leads regarding the Munich attack and used that information advantage to lure Tzadok Ophir to a meeting where a Mohammed Rabah, a Moroccan emigrant, promised to reveal information about BSO. Instead, Rabah shot Ophir four times at close range. Luckily, Ophir survived.[79] Regardless of where the focus of retaliation would lie, PM Meir knew that Israel had to react more swiftly and severely than ever before, both to satisfy the public and to counter the real threat to Israeli security that had taken shape in the BSO.

The next task was to determine exactly who was responsible for directing and planning the attack in Munich. The attack highlighted the Israelis' lack of knowledge about the BSO as a PLO subsidiary and even more importantly, the Israeli intelligence services' complete lack of sources with access to the PLO's larger international network. Days after Munich, the Mossad's analytic Tzomet division quadrupled with newly reassigned and conscripted personnel. Similarly, the Aman (military intelligence) Branch 4 established an Overseas Terrorism department almost overnight. They installed Televisions to monitor Arab media and a new computer, the first of its kind in the Aman, to process thousands of raw intelligence reports and begin the task of piecing together the clandestine structures of the PLO. The chief of Branch 4, Lieutenant Colonel Mor, noted that:

> the massacre at Munich helped us understand that we would have to deal with a new subject that we had never before encountered – terror attacks against Israeli targets abroad…an attack on foreign territory gave the Palestinians a distinct advantage. They received international attention and our job to root out terrorists and prevent future attacks got that much harder. In terms of intelligence gathering, it meant starting from scratch, from the foundations. We

[79] Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 36.

> didn't have hard, dependable facts. The massacre came as a complete shock; it knocked us off our feet and forced us to act under immense pressure.[80]

In the end, Israeli intelligence loosened the typical reporting scrutiny used to separate fact from hearsay and developed a list names of personnel either currently employed by BSO or suspected to have been involved in planning the Munich operation.

Originally, a list of 11 names, was created as an initial target list for Wrath of God; eleven Palestinian targets were chosen, one for each Israeli killed in Munich In theory, all of the names on the list were supposed to be associated with the Munich plot. The names were generated only after the combined intelligence teams of the Mossad and Aman submitted dossiers to a committee, Committee X. PM Meir chaired the committee and acted as the final approval for what was an automatic death sentence during a pseudo-trial of suspected terrorists in the dossiers.[81] The head of the Mossad acted as prosecutor in the trial. The Defense Minister, Moshe Dayan and Foreign Minister Yigal Allon also sat on the committee and acted as judges along with the Prime Minister.[82]

Little else is actually known about the proceedings of Committee X since no official records were kept. Accounts from personal interviews also claim that even after sentencing, PM Meir would reserve approval of the assassination operation only after hearing the details of the plan and feeling assured that no innocents would be injured.[83] From the beginning however, the arbitrary assignment of "11 names" did not address the goal of prevention. The BSO and its parent organization were large complex networks distributed throughout Europe and the Middle East. Eleven mid-level PLO members was not going to

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[80] Klein, *Striking Back*, 99–100.

[81] Klein, *Striking Back*, 107.

[82] Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 40.

[83] Klein, *Striking Back*, 107.

impact an organization with several hundred members in Europe and several thousand more in the Middle East. [84]

E. THE LIST

1. Ali Hassan Salameh aka "The Red Prince"

Salameh, according to Palestinian sources, was a rising star in the PLO and a former member of the Fatah's elite al-Fatah Jihaz el-Razd (Razd) reconnaissance and sabotage unit. The Razd was known for its cunning and ruthless tactics.85 While in the Razd, Salameh was subordinate to Salah Khalaf aka Abu Iyad, however after Black September in 1970, Razd was disbanded and Khalaf fell out of favor with Arafat. Arafat chose Salameh to form a new clandestine commando unit, the BSO. Salameh was responsible for the BSO and synchronizing its operations with Fatah and the PLO, and therefore the most culpable person on Mossad's list. Khalaf was later subordinated to Salameh. He also coordinated independent operations using the BSO moniker. Salameh was also primarily located in Beirut with a large security detail and considered to be a hard target by the Israelis. Salameh gained notoriety for BSO after coordinating the killing of Jordanian Prime Minister Tal on November 28, 1971.86

2. Abu Daoud

Daoud was a principal planner for the Munich operation. Daoud was extremely savvy and never allowed himself to be located long enough for

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84 Estimates vary greatly regarding the actual strength of militant groups under the PLO umbrella. Conservative estimates in Ian Black's *Israel's Secret Wars* (p.246) place the active BSO membership in Europe around 115 agents with several hundred supporters and sympathizers in various stages of recruitment in 1972. Ami Pedhazur, in the *Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism* (p.44), estimates that over 3,000 Palestinian fighters were killed by Jordanian forces in the 1970 Black September purge with 10,000 more wounded. By late 1972, the PLO had rebuilt its fighting strength to the pre-Black September force.

85 Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 37.

86 Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 307–310.

Mossad to plan an operation. Later, Daoud would admit to his involvement in the Munich operation.87

3. Dr. Mahmoud Hamshari

PLO representative to France and alleged coordinator for PLO militant activity in Europe. Dr. Hamshari was a declared foreign diplomat in Paris and an intellectual and considered a threat mostly due to his relationship with the leftist PFLP faction.88

4. Wael Zwaiter

Yasir Arafat's 2nd cousin and employee of the Libyan Embassy in Rome. Alleged coordinator for PLO militant activity in Europe. Poet, socialite and aspiring actor. Most recent efforts included translating One Thousand One Nights from Arabic to Italian.

5. Dr. Basil Raoud al-Kubaisi aka Bassel Rauf Kubeisy

Facilitator for Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP). Kubaisi is described as a "life-long revolutionary" and was responsible for attempting to assassinate King Feisal of Iraq in 1956 and Israel PM Meir in New York in March 1973.89 Kubaisi was mainly responsible for BSO logistics and communications in Europe.

6. Kamal Nasser

Official spokesman for the PLO in Beirut. Killed during Operation Spring of Youth on April 10th, 1973.

87 Calahan, "Countering Terrorism," Chapter 3.

88 Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 41.

89 Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 43.

7. Kemal Adwan (Udwan)

Chief of al-Fatah sabotage operations (Western Wing) in occupied territories. Maintained records of many PLO clandestine operations and militant activities. Killed during Spring of Youth on April 10, 1973. The capture of his personal files gave the Israeli's key information about Fatah's clandestine network in the occupied territories and Fatah's recent efforts to coordinate activities with PLFP.90

8. Abu Yussuf, aka Mahmoud Yussuf Najjer

PLO general committee member (high ranking PLO member). Acted as PLO's foreign minister and member of Arafat's inner circle. Killed during Spring of Youth on April 10, 1973. His loss forced the PLO to restructure its security and forced Arafat to mend relations and bring Salah Khalaf back into the inner circle.91 Several sources claim Abu Yussuf was the intellectual force behind many of the BSO's worldwide attacks, including the assassination of the Jordanian PM, the Munich massacre and the Bangkok embassy attack.92 Also a founding member of Fatah and the second in command of Fatah in April 1973.93

9. Mohammed Boudia

PLO member responsible for coordinating European operations

10. Hussein Abad al-Chir

PLO contact with Russian KGB in Cyprus

11. Dr. Wadi Haddad:

Member of PLFP and coordinator for militant actions. Inner circle of PLFP.

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90 Sayigh, *Search for State*, 311.

91 Ibid.

92 Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 44.

93 Klein, *Striking Back*, 158.

F. **The First Target: Wael Zwaiter**

The goal of undertaking morally justified operations that would deter and preventfuture terror attacks, were not well supported by the initial target list generated by Committee X. The first two targets, Wael Zwaiter and Dr. Mahmoud Hamshari, were not clearly linked to Black September or even any form of violence sanctioned by the PLO or any other group. [Mentioned above] Zwaiter is described as a "low-key quiet man who loved literature."[94] He had been an extra in several movies, including a brief speaking role in Peter Sellers' *Pink Panther* and up until his death on October 16, 1972, he was working on an Arabic-to-Italian translation of the anonymous Arab classic *One Thousand and One Nights*.

On the evening of October 16th, 1972, Wael Zwaiter ate dinner with his European girlfriend, Janet Brown, at her house and then took a bus to his neighborhood on the Piazza Annibaliano in northern Rome. He stopped in a local bar only two blocks from his house to make a phone call and buy cigarettes. Wael lived a modest life and his phone in the apartment had been shut off due to unpaid bills. It was approximately 2230 hours when Wael walked the rest of the way to his apartment. Wael walked into the foyer of his apartment and was immediately confronted by two men. The men shot Wael 12 times at close range with silenced .22 caliber Beretta pistols, the preferred weapon of Mossad Caesera agents. A small Fiat 125 waited exactly two 90-degree turns from Wael's apartment for the two assassins. Wael died almost instantly and within four hours, the entire Mossad team had left Italy without incident. The operation was a complete tactical success; the target was eliminated, the entire Mossad team recovered without incident, and aside from the fact that Wael was killed with the signature tool of the Mossad, no evidence was left behind. The Rome papers did report the next morning that Wael Zwaiter's death was likely "politically driven" and "carried out by a Jewish group."[95] The real question was whether Wael Zwaiter's death actually supported the strategic goals of

[94] Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 41.

[95] Klein, *Striking Back*, 121.

prevention and morally justified deterrence. It appeared that Zwaiter's biggest crime was being Yassir Arafat's cousin. Abu Daoud, the official leader of BSO stated:

> I challenge the Israeli government, or any of its departments, to prove that Wael Zwaiter, the philosopher who carries books and not guns, had anything to do with the Munich operation,' said Abu Daoud, a leader of Black September. 'Zwaiter had contacts in all the Italian political parties. He was … a philosopher, not an armed freedom fighter. They killed him because they wanted to kill off any kind of positive image of the Palestinian cause in Europe.96

The Israeli's claimed that Zwaiter was involved with BSO and even played a key role in an August 1972 plot to blow up an El Al Airline 707. [97] Israel never actually produced any evidence linking Zwaiter to any criminal or terror acts, and while it is believable that his sympathies would have rested with the Palestinian cause, his public persona was that of a budding poet and humble aspiring socialite. Aaron Klein claims that "uncorroborated and improperly cross-referenced intelligence information tied him to the support network of Black September in Rome. From there, a slippery slope led the politically active, low-level saya'an to the Mossad's hit list."[98] Zwaiter was, however, an easy target with personal ties to Arafat, the man ultimately responsible for Munich and much more. The next day, Palestinian radio stations, seeking to gain a propaganda advantage, announced Zwaiter as a "shahid" [martyr] and a hero. The announcement claimed he was killed by Zionist intelligence and further stated, "Fatah stresses again that the pursuit and assassination of our fighters will only increase its determination to carry on with its struggle and revolution."[99]

Wael Zwaiter's death did little to deter PLO militant actions. During the same month as his death, over 100 letter bombs were sent to various Israeli offices in Europe and other places. Fourteen letter bombs went to the United

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96 Reeve, *One Day in September.*.

97 Reeve, *One Day in September*.

98 Klein, *Striking Back*, 123.

99 Klein, *Striking Back*, 124.

Kingdom, killing one Israeli employee at their Embassy in London.[100] Most of the letter bombs, fortunately, were intercepted due to recently implemented security procedures.

G. THE SECOND TARGET: DR. MAHMUD HAMSHARI

Dr. Hamshari was killed in Paris in December 1972 by explosives planted in his telephone by Israeli agents. Hamshari died almost 3 weeks later in the hospital and revealed several facts to the police before his death that would bring Israeli involvement to the forefront of international politics and strain Israel-European relations further.[101] Dr. Hamshari was a harder target than Zwaiter since he had official diplomatic status and usually traveled with a security guard. In an effort to avoid a shootout in the streets of Paris, the Mossad team determined that a more nuanced plan was required to kill Dr. Hamshari. In early December 1972 Mossad arranged for workmen to accidentally damage the phone line outside Hamshari's house. Additionally an asset posing as an Italian journalist had also recently contacted Hamshari and expressed his desire to set up a time for an interview. A Mossad agent, posing as a telephone repair man, then clandestinely installed a small explosive device into Hamshari's phone. On December 8th, when Hamshari answered the phone, the Italian journalist asked if he was speaking with Dr. Hamshari. Upon confirmation of Hamshari's name, the explosive was detonated.[102]

Hamshari was the official PLO representative to France and was a respected scholar with no obvious ties to the Munich incident or Black September. Still, after the killing, the Israeli government claimed that Hamshari was involved with BSO.[103] The fact that Israel officially denounced involvement in the killings probably precluded them from producing any evidence, if they had

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[100] Ami Pedhazur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 41–43.

[101] Black and Morris*, Israel's Secret Wars*, 273.

[102] Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 42.

[103] Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, 273.

it, to justify the action. While Hamshari was not a viable target with respect to the retribution aspect of the Munich response, he was more operationally relevant than Wael Zwaiter. Hamshari, besides being the PLO's emissary in Paris, was closely involved with the often violent PFLP faction and he had been tied to an aborted attempt on PM Ben-Gurion's life in 1969.[104] Regardless of past transgressions suspected by Israeli intelligence, the fact remains that the first two targets of Wrath of God were diplomats in Europe and generally considered to be law abiding citizens by the host nations. In the eyes of the world, Israel had just murdered two innocent men. The concept of legitimate revenge based on the biblical 'eye for an eye' violated with respect to the Munich massacre.

The PLO was adamant to respond in kind to Israel and a cycle of violence ensued with renewed intensity after Hamshari's death. Ali Hassan, the PLO's charismatic second in charge, ordered BSO to kill Israeli agents and conduct more 'spectacular' attacks abroad. The first notable event was when four BSO operatives stormed the Israeli Embassy in Bangkok, intending to take the Israeli Ambassador hostage. Instead, they happened upon the visiting Israeli Ambassador to Cameroon and several staff members. Thai officials convinced the BSO members to take a flight back to Egypt and the event, while internationally spectacular, had little bloodshed.[105] Shortly thereafter, the BSO began killing Israeli intelligence agents in Europe. The "spy master" Baruch Cohen was killed in Madrid in January 1973 by a young Palestinian student he was attempting to recruit. The student was really a BSO member and tasked by BSO leader Abu Iyad to kill the Israeli agent.[106]

In addition to targeted killings, BSO sent another wave of letter bombs in January to multiple Israeli diplomatic outposts. In March 1973, BSO killed another Mossad agent in Cyprus and then two more agents in Paris and Nicosia a few weeks later. Probably the boldest attack was the BSO's attempt to shoot

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[104] Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 41.

[105] Reeves, *One Day in September*.

[106] Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, 273.

down PM Meir's jet on its approach to Rome international airport in late January 1973. PM Meir was enroute to visit the Pope and Ali Hassan learned about her impending visit a few weeks earlier from suspected KGB contacts. The Israeli security only learned about the attack a few hours before the PM was to arrive in Rome. The attack was thwarted less than an hour before the PM's plane was to land by the bold actions of an observant Israeli agent that noticed a suspicious food service truck outside the airport. After a brief dramatic vehicle interdiction, authorities found several Soviet STRELLA rockets in the truck.[107] The rockets were acquired through PLO contacts with the KGB in Cyprus and smuggled in on Ali Hassan's personal yacht. Ali Hassan remained safely in Lebanon during the operation.[108] The cyclic of violence continued in earnest throughout the rest of 1973, culminating with another Arab-Israeli war later that fall. Operation Wrath of God did not deter terror attacks against Israelis. Instead, it actually gave the PLO increased incentive to step up the pace and intensity of their operations against Israel.

H. SPRING OF YOUTH, APRIL 10, 1973

Spring of Youth (SoY) stands out from the other targeted killings associated with Wrath of God. SoY was the only mission conducted as a military raid with the IDF's elite Sayaret Maktal with support from Mossad, IDF naval forces and paratroopers. Spring of Youth was also the only mission conducted in the PLO sanctuary of Beirut and in addition targeted senior PLO personnel as well as key facilities. IDF soldiers also seized several documents from Udwan's home, which Udwan's aide would later say was a "complete catastrophe" since they contained vital information about the PLO's clandestine militant operations.[109] SoY had an immediate and significant impact on the PLO and forced Arafat to replace key leaders and rebuild the internal security of his

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[107] Reeves, *One Day in September.*

[108] Ibid.

[109] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 311.

organization.[110] Arafat had to replace three members of his inner circle and address the loss of sensitive operational and security information.

Besides the fact that the Israelis targeted significant PLO figures and not just middle men, Spring of Youth used all of the available military and intelligence capabilities that Israel had. From its inception, the Israeli leadership believed they would only get one chance to surprise the PLO inner circle in their Beirut sanctuary. The operation required weeks of detailed planning and rehearsals by the Sayaret, while Mossad agents conducted surveillance of the targets as well as the infiltration point on a private hotel beach on the outskirts of Beirut. Knowing that the assault forces would need to infiltrate past Lebanese military and PLO armed security, a well-orchestrated plan was developed to infiltrate the Sayaret commandos in pairs with one commando, the smallest of the pair, dressed in drag. All weapons and ammunition were carefully concealed in the each operator's garments. Mossad agents had rehearsed driving routes to and from the hotel beach to designated drop off points in Beirut.

On the night of April 9th, IDF missile boats floated several miles off shore and unloaded naval commandos and Sayaret soldiers onto small rubber boats. The men landed on the beach without incident and under the cover of total darkness. Minutes later, Sayaret Maktal soldiers dressed as happy tourist couples piled into three waiting Buicks driven by Mossad agents who had been conducting detailed surveillance of the targets, routes and local security forces. The targets were Kamal Nasser (PLO official spokesman), Kemal Adwan (Fatah key leader), and Abu Yussuf (PLO foreign minister and confidant of Arafat). Within 30 minutes from landing on the beach, the teams had infiltrated into Beirut through police and PLO checkpoints, entered the two target buildings and killed all three targets while, captured several important PLO documents and returned

[110] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 311–312.

to the beach without losing any soldiers. One team was forced to engage a Lebanese Gendarme vehicle , killing the occupants. [111]

Besides meeting the tactical objective of killing the targets, the team recovered what was later called “a gold-mine of documents” from Kemal Adwan’s apartment.[112] The most significant immediate gain for Israel was the fact that the PLO would need to pause and replace two key military commanders, Adwan and Yussuf. Kamal Nasser was a more difficult target to justify from a military perspective and even harder to measure with regard to the actual operational benefit gained from his death. He was, after all, only the political spokesman and his relevance as a military target was debated in committee X for several weeks. In the end, he was targeted because of his prominent role as a public voice for the PLO and the fact that the PLO did not distinguish military functions from political ones.[113] Essentially, Nasser promoted the PLO violent extremists agenda and was considered a combatant. Perhaps the greatest benefit for Israel resulting from SoY was the psychological impact on the Palestinian population. Israel had, after all struck deep into the Lion’s den, killed three prominent leaders and disappeared again without a trace. The clandestine infiltration was not Israel’s typical tactic when attacking Palestinian targets in the region. Later the Palestinians would call SoY “Amaliyat Vardun”(Mission Vardun) and the notion that Israel could strike anywhere would be instilled in the Palestinian psyche.[114]

I. THE LAST MISSION: LILLEHAMMER

In early July 1973, Israeli intelligence believed they knew where Ali Hassan Salameh, aka the Red Prince, would travel to next. By the summer of 1973, Mossad was certain that Salameh was the most significant operational leader in Fatah associated with Munich and knew that he was Arafat’s chosen

111 Klein, *Striking Back*, 157–170.

112 Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 45.

113 Klein, *Striking Back*, 158.

114 Klein, *Striking Back*, 170.

successor. The Red Prince was, by modern standards, a true high value target. Salameh was also well guarded and difficult to track, so when Mossad sources divulged that Salameh was traveling to Norway, Mossad reacted. Mike Harrari, the commander of Mossad's Caesara unit and lead planner for Wrath of God, took personal command of the proposed mission to kill Salameh in Norway. Harrari did not know what Salameh's purpose was in Norway, but believed that Salameh was coordinating some yet undetermined attack in Scandinavia.

Another possible story was that Salameh was planning a major attack in Cyprus in response to Israel forcing Libyan Airlines flight #114 to crash land in February 1973 in Israel because the aircraft had deviated into Israeli controlled airspace, likely due to severe weather and navigation errors. Israeli officials could not make radio contact with the aircraft due to weather and believed it was on a terror mission. The order was given to shoot it down and 108 of 113 passengers were killed.[115] [116] All Mossad really knew by July 14th, was that a young Algerian, believed to be BSO's liaison in Europe, was traveling to Oslo, Norway and was reportedly intending to meet with his boss, Salameh.[117] Mossad officials also knew that they would have to act quickly to prevent a possible terror attack and catch their most lucrative target yet in the open. By July 18th, Mossad surveillance learned that their Algerian suspect was enroute from Oslo to Lillehammer, Norway. Mike Harrari hastily assembled a team of Mossad agents, not the typical Caesara trained combatants and none with local Norwegian linguistic skills or area familiarity.

By July 20th, one of the Mossad agents believed he saw Salameh leaving a café on a bicycle. Part of the problem, however, was that Salameh was rarely seen in public and most Mossad intelligence about his location was second hand. As Aaron Klein states, "the decision to crown the man in the café as Ali Hassan

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[115] Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 45.

[116] Steven Katsineris, "Forgotten History: The Case of Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114," *Media Monitors*, 8 February, 2008, http://usa.mediamonitors.net/content/view/full/49348.

[117] Klein, *Striking Back*, 186.

Salameh was made on the basis of very slim intelligence. The available information was certainly insufficient to authorize an assassination."[118] Convinced that they had their man, Caesara commander Harrari approved the operation and had two of his combatants flown in to conduct the hit. The two men, dark skinned combatants, drove a rental car from Oslo to the small town of Lillehammer on July 21st. They likely stood out in the mostly Scandinavian town of circa 20,000 inhabitants. Earlier that day surveillance had observed a blond haired pregnant woman accompanying their quarry.

That evening the pair, who were clearly a couple, went to a movie theater to watch *Where Eagles Dare* , a World War II movie starring Clint Eastwood and Richard Burton.[119] After the movie, the couple boarded a bus and then got off and walked down Porobakakan Street to their house. The combatants stopped their car, got out and shot the man 10 times at close range with their .22 caliber Beretta pistols. They then got back in their vehicle and sped away. A neighbor observed the incident from her window and called the police, who arrived within three minutes. The man died later that night after arriving at the hospital. The dead man was Achmed Bouchiki, a Moroccan immigrant and waiter at a local café. Bouchiki was married to a Norwegian woman. The pair lived in Lillehammer and was expecting their first child in two months.

The Mossad escape plan was for the team to travel in separate vehicles back to Oslo that night after having sanitized their apartments in Lillehammer. They were also supposed to return the rental cars and hide in the capital city for a few days before leaving. The next day, Dan Art and Marianne Gladnikoff, two Mossad assets hastily recruited for the mission due to one's language ability and the other's regional knowledge of Scandinavia, were arrested at Pornavo Airport while trying to return one of the rental vehicles used for the operation. The vehicle had run a roadblock the night before and hit a police officer in the

[118] Klein, *Striking Back*, 187.

[119] Klein, *Striking Back*, 189.

process. The license plate number was distributed to Oslo police, who were waiting at the car rental shop. The two were not seasoned Mossad agents and, lacking a viable cover story, told the police everything. A subsequent search of the suspects apartments lead to the arrest of four more team members that same day, two of whom were official members of the Israeli embassy in Norway. Only Michael Harrari and the two combatants that shot Bouchiki escaped.

The six detainees were subsequently tried in Norwegian court and five of six sentenced to jail terms in February 1974. The Israeli government denied any knowledge of the incident., However, in 1996 Prime Minister Shimon Peres sent a lawyer to Oslo to compensate Bouchiki's family with $400,000 while continuing to deny any official responsibility for the murder. [120] Victor Ostrowsky, a former Mossad agent, claimed that the attempt to kill Salameh was done with the knowledge and even support of the Norwegian secret service, but after the facts surfaced about Bouchiki being killed, Harrari ordered his support team member Arbel to allow himself to be caught, thus permitting the Caesara combatants to escape.[121] Ostrowski also claims that a Palestinian fighter captured by Israel a few years later would reveal that Salameh purposely set up the Israeli team in Lillehammer. Regardless, the operation in Lillehammer was a complete debacle for Israel. Upon return to Israel, Harrari and Mossad chief Zvi Zamir attempted to turn in their resignation to PM Meir. She refused their resignations, but the operation did force Mossad to reevaluate their intelligence collection and analysis on the PLO as well as their combatant tactics. Operation Wrath of God ended for the Israelis as a result of Lillehammer.

The Lillehammer events hit the local and international news almost immediately. A Lebanese newspaper reported that Salameh was in Stockholm during the operation.[122] There was a public outcry in Israel demanding the

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[120] Klein, *Striking Back*, 184–198.

[121] Victor Ostrowski, TV video clip about Lillehammer derived from www.victorostrowski.com , accessed 3 May 2013 at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nMAidvODnE

[122] Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 48.

Prime Minister's and Mossad chief's resignation. Although there appeared to be little real international political fallout, the domestic response gave some momentum to PM Meir's political opposition. She resigned her post as Prime Minister in 1974 after the Agranat Commission published the results of its investigation into the causes of the Yom Kippur War. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, several historians surmise that Israel's zealousness in pursuing Black September directly contributed to the neglect of more traditional military intelligence efforts that would have provided early warning of the October 1973 Yom Kippur war.[123] [124]Reinforcing the notion of overzealousness in the terrorist hunt, a few weeks after Lillehammer another faulty intelligence report led to Israel mistakenly forcing an airliner headed to Baghdad to land in Israel. The IDF believed that PFLP leader George Habash and his operations chief Wadi Hadad were among the 81 passengers on the aircraft.[125] They were wrong once again and the aircraft was released with all 81 passengers.

The Palestinians were not finished with their international terror campaign and on August 5, 1973 Fatah operatives approached the El Al airlines counter at the international airport in Athens and opened fire. The attack killed three passengers and wounded 55 others. The attack was organized by break away Fatah leader Sabri al-Banna (aka Abu Nidal)and executed by members of PFLP, thus precipitating the Israeli effort to capture Dr. Habash on the airliner headed to Baghdad on August 10th.[126] By mid-1972, Arafat had already decided to cease the terror campaign and attempt to establish political credibility. Arafat later ordered Fatah to kill al-Banna and Abu Mahmoud, another break away Fatah leader.[127] Arafat had already begun to internally reorganize the PLO after the

[123] Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 49–50.

[124] Cobban, The Palestine Liberation Organization, 55.

[125] Katz, *Guards Without Frontiers*, 49.

[126] Sayigh, *Search for State*, 311–312.

[127] Helena Cobban, *The Palestine Liberation Organization: People, Power, and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 55.

exodus from Jordan in September 1970 and hoped to gain greater control of militant operations by establishing a Higher Military Council. By 1972, guerilla attacks against Israel had dropped to approximately 300 in contrast to 670 the year before. Arafat did not intend to cease military actions, rather he sought to establish the PLO as the representative state of a people without a nation. The terror campaign was undermining the PLO's political credibility.[128] In September 1973, Egyptian President Anwar Saddat invited Arafat to a meeting and invited the PLO to participate in the planned October 6th attack against Israel. Saddat and his counterpart in Syria intended to catch Israel off-guard and regain territory lost in 1967. The plan was to engage in a limited war, so that Sadat could negotiate with Israel from a position of strength. The PLO hoped to benefit from the post-war negotiations.[129]

J. GOALS

1. Deterrence

While it seems plausible on the surface that the assassination of PLO members could act as a deterrent to others, the fact remains that it did not work. Most social scientists and intelligence analysts today would similarly predict that assassination would usually serve to harden the resolve of terror groups. Considering that BSO was originally constructed from the elite members of the Rasd commandos commanded by Salah Khalaf contributed to the fearless resolve demonstrated by the BSO. While killing all of the members of a small closed terror cell, if done rapidly, could result in the actual destruction of the group; the Israeli plan did not account for the fact that BSO was really just moniker used to establish a veil of plausible deniability for the PLO and its Fatah militant arm. Israeli intelligence did not have a good measure of the degree to which the PLO had repopulated its ranks after the September 1970 exodus from Jordan. While Fatah was severely weakened during the Black September, it was

[128] Sayigh, *Search for State*, 311–312.

[129] Cobban, *The Palestine Liberation Organization*, 57.

replenished in the months following the move to Lebanon. Fatah was able to continue operations under the guise of the BSO name in spite of the Israeli attempts to deter BSO actions through the attrition of mid-level leaders and members in Europe.

2. Justice

There was little argument domestically or internationally about Israel's right to seek justice for the Munich massacre. In contrast to previous efforts to seek justice, such as the case of Adolf Eichmann, Israel chose to forgo capture missions followed by public trials. Instead the choice was made to combine justice and deterrence through public assassinations of persons suspected to be responsible for Munich, at least to some degree, without the benefit of public trial. In a vain attempt to stay true to tenants of a popular justice system, committee X was formed and acted like a summary court. From the justice perspective, the assassinations were extra-judicial killings that would raise as much controversy as a drone strike program. Besides the questionable judicial process employed to generate the list of eleven names, some of the initial persons chosen for summary execution were of questionable culpability regarding Munich. Wael Zwaiter, the first target killed, was probably the most questionable and on the surface seemed to be targeted only because of his familial ties to Arafat. The fact that he was killed in a covert manner and Israel denied any involvement, also prevented Israel from making a public post-facto justification. Better yet, would have been an appeal to Italy for extradition. Even if Israel had some irrefutable evidence linking Zwaiter to Munich, a better plan would have been to capture him, with or without Italian approval, and try him in court.

The Palestinian perspective was that their attacks against Israelis, regardless of where they occurred and the means used, were justified. They were, after all, at war. During the Munich hostage crisis, the Voice of Palestine radio broadcasts transmitted a message from the BSO hostage takers:

> We are neither killers nor bandits, we are persecuted people who have no land and no homeland…to give up our lives from the very first moment. We will the youth of the Arab nation to search for death so that life is given to them, their countries, and their people. Each drop of blood spilled from you and from us will be oil to kindle this nation with flames of victory and liberation.[130]

The fact remained that over a tens of thousands of Palestinians were displaced as a result of the 1967 war between Israel and the combined Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian forces. Israel retained significant territory in the Sinai, Gaza and South Lebanon, preventing Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes. Many remain in refugee camps to this day. The strategic consideration is the instant recruiting pool and moral justification for action that a terrorist groups gains from a concentrated and greatly impoverished population. The fact that Israel also conducted massive airstrikes and armor raids, in the days following Munich, into Palestinian camps in Syria and Lebanon, killing innocent woman and children, also fueled the animosity.[131]

3. Prevention

Prevention was the most realistic goal for Israel and also the most difficult to measure with respect to success or failure. Initially Israel had little intelligence about the newly rebuilt Fatah and appeared to lack an appreciation of the depth and capabilities of the PLO's intelligence organizations and their operational reach. Israel had little specific information about the PLO's tactical plans outside of the occupied territories and attempts to penetrate its European network were thwarted as evidenced by Baruch Cohen's murder in Madrid. The greatest preventative success was likely Spring of Youth. In a single operation, Israel forced the PLO to pause and react to the compromise of vital information about its clandestine operations that was found in the Fatah West Bank commander Adwan's apartment.

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[130] Reeves. *One Day in September*.

[131] Reeve. *One Day in September*.

Additionally, Arafat had to replace two high ranking leaders. Ironically, Arafat chose to mend relations with Fatah co-founder Salah Khalaf, aka Abu Iyad; an act that in of itself would temper the PLO's overall terror efforts since Khalaf was the principle supporter of the radical BSO operations. Arafat would eventually convince Khalaf that BSO style tactics were not working with respect to advancing international support for the Palestinian cause. In another twist of fate, Khalaf was in Beirut the evening of SoY and had asked to stay at Kamal Nassir's apartment that night. Nassir, however, refused his friend because he needed to stay up late write a eulogy for another PLO member that had fallen to Israeli gunfire. Both Arafat and Ali Hassan Salameh were in Beirut that night within 200 yards of the Sayaret commandos.[132]

SoY, more than any other mission seemed to encompass successful aspects of all of the goals established by PM Meir and committee X. The compromise of operational information, coupled with the loss of key leaders forced Fatah to change its plans and personnel and represented a preventative success.

Similarly, the fact that known militant commanders were targeted seemed a better fit with regard to seeking justice against those responsible for Munich. It was closer to justice on the scale of hunting Osama Bin Laden and his inner circle after 9/11. Additionally, SoY was the only operation that Israel ever publicly acknowledged responsibility for, thus allowing the government to make a public appeal and present a moral justification for its actions.[133] Lastly, SoY likely had the greatest deterrent effect. The public acknowledgement coupled with the audacity and effectiveness of the operation, including the absolute minimal loss of innocent lives possible for such a bold commando raid, created a public

[132] Klein, *Striking Back*, 169–170.

[133] Gordon Rayfield, *The Righteous Executioners: A Comparative Analysis of Jewish Terrorists of the 1940's and Palestinian Terrorists of the 1970's* (New York: City University, 1980), 485.

mystique in Beirut that "the Mossad and the Israelis can reach anyone, anywhere, even in their bedrooms."[134]

K. POLITICAL RISK AND OPPORTUNITY COSTS

In determining the best means to deter further terror attacks abroad, the Israelis also had to consider the costs associated with doing nothing. Certainly the Munich massacre was unprovoked from an Israeli perspective and the conditions that motivated the BSO to commit acts of terror, the occupation of Palestine by Jews, was not something that could be easily amended. The challenge facing the Israeli government is well articulated in a letter written by one of the Wrath of God team leaders to author George Jonas:

> What will stop it? Not assassination teams or military incursions. In my view, terrorism will continue until the political and economic situation shifts sufficiently to bring equity and balance throughout all of the Middle East. "An eye for an eye" may seem an appropriate response, but it is not a solution. Unfortunately, until we find one, we must be prepared to deal with continuing terrorist attacks and the subsequent acts of revenge that will inevitably follow.[135]

From the standpoint of the government, a strong response was a political imperative to maintaining control over the irate Israeli population. PM Meir had to act as a matter of political survival. All of the sources referenced for this thesis also share a common appreciation for PM Meir deep sense of personal and sometimes motherly commitment to her people. PM Meir was deeply conflicted about Wrath of God and took personal responsibility for authorizing each mission.

Still, assassination was not the only dimension to the Munich response. The Israeli intelligence services tried to combine their lethal activities with more subtle techniques such as running obituaries in local European papers for junior PLO and BSO members who were still living there. Mossad agents would then

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[134] Klein, *Striking Back*, 169.

[135] Jonas, *Vengeance,* Xix.

call the concerned individual and after confirming the target's identity, begin to articulate intimate details about the targets own personal activities and those of his family. The phone call would end with the Mossad agent strongly recommending that the targeted individual leave the PLO and discontinue any association with its activities.[136] The effects from the Mossad psychological deterrence attempts are difficult to assess, but it is likely that some PLO members left the organization for fear of Israeli assassins.

Regardless of the limited deterrent effects achieved through intimidation, Operation Wrath of God failed to deter further terror attacks against Israelis abroad. PLO attacks, exercised through the BSO, actually became more focused against Israeli government officials and agents in Europe after December 1972. In the end, it was Arafat that forced Fatah to abandon the terror campaign. Arafat realized that Fatah's terror actions were gaining international attention for the Palestinian cause but not necessarily support.[137] Arafat realized the political climate had changed and knew that Fatah and the PLO would be better served by seeking a political solution.

The challenge that PM Meir faced was what to do about the increased threat posed by the PLO's bold new strategy that was backed by strong ties to Egypt and the Soviet Union. Airstrikes and police actions in Palestinian safe havens in the Middle East had not diminished the threat nor deterred others from joining the PLO. Crenshaw's theories on deterrence if they had been applied could have helped PM Meir shape a more effective response strategy

> The task of the government is to encourage disintegration without provoking the escalation of violence. Denying reward is difficult. What the outside world perceives as 'failure' may not appear so to such an adversary. The organization's structure of incentives must be altered in order to reduce the possibilities of violence. Offering

[136] Reeve, *One Day in September*.

[137] Anat N. Kurz, *Fatah and the Politics of Violence: The Institutionalization of a Popular Struggle* (Portland, Oregon: Sussex Academic Press, 2005), 670.

> new, non-violent incentives, increasing opportunities for exit to non-violent political methods, or promoting the expression of internal dissent are policy options that fit this theoretical interpretation. The use of military force is not recommended in the terms of this approach, since retaliation may only strengthen loyalty within the group. At the least, the results of the use of force will be highly unpredictable. Counter-intelligence initiatives combined with judicial and political measures are more suitable.[138]

It is not clear, however, what political measures the Israelis could have offered the Palestinians, short of allowing them to return to their traditional claimed homeland in Israel, that would have compelled enough PLO group members to leave the organization and cause its disintegration. The fact that the PLO received material, funding and training support from several Arab nations and the Soviet Union also served to severely hinder any deterrence or consolation attempts.

L. CONCLUSION:

The post mortem analysis of Operation Wrath of God indicates that the Israeli strategic goals were not achieved. In regard to the morale victory through enacting revenge, the Israeli's failed initially in targeting individuals with strong and clearly known ties to BSO or PLO military activities. The Israelis did eventually kill the Red Prince, probably the most legitimate target, in 1979. Sporadic revenge killings from the Munich incident actually continued into the 1990s; however, nothing after the Lillehammer incident in 1973 was really directly part of the Wrath of God operation. The fact that Israel was violating the sovereignty of its European allies in order to conduct these operations also seems to have been a misjudgment. Relations with European partners were severely strained and the veil of plausible deniability in this case was far too thin to provide any cushioning from the diplomatic fallout.

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[138] Martha Crenshaw. "*Theories of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organization Approaches" in Inside Terrorist Organizations,* ed. David C. Rapoport. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 25.

If deterrence was the secondary objective, it also failed miserably. Abu Daud, the operational commander of the BSO faction stated years later in an interview, “In the Palestinian movement, we have a saying: every crisis has its own morals. At that time, a state of war existed between us and the Israelis. They were killing us, and we were killing them, except they were killing many times more of us than we were killing of them…” [139] The Palestinians supported the PLO and BSO actions and the Israeli response to the Munich incident likely had the effect of further solidifying popular support for the PLO amongst the Arab populations in the middle east. Salah Khalaf would later write “unable to wage warfare across Israel’s borders, [Fatah’s young men] insisted on carrying out revolutionary violence of another kind, commonly known elsewhere as ‘terrorism’…”[140]

In the same paragraph, Khalaf simply stated that BSO was a means to focus the violent feelings toward Israel that pervaded the Palestinian people and while they [PLO leadership] knew that the BSO terror attacks would undermine the PLO’s political legitimacy, it [BSO] was needed to “channel the wave of anger, to structure it and give it a political goal,” thus preventing that anger from “taking on an individualistic and anarchic form.”[141] Sadly, the Israeli public’s temperament after the Munich massacre seemed similar to that of the Palestinians described by Khalaf. In the end, domestic unrest combined with a real concern for political survival guided the Wrath of God plan.

A better approach may have been to focus military efforts on precision strikes and raids against key PLO figures such as Salameh and Arafat in their strongholds in Lebanon. The Israeli government proved its capability to strike into the heart of the PLO sanctuary during Operation Spring of Youth (April 1973). The operation was a stunning success and drew no negative response from any European or western ally. The operation was essentially background noise to the

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[139] Reeve. *One Day in September.*

[140] Kurz, *Fatah and the Politics of Violence*, 69.

[141] Kurz, *Fatah and the Politics of Violence*, 69.

rest of the international community in the ongoing Arab-Israeli struggle. Spring of Youth was Israel's only attempt to conduct targeted killings inside Palestinian strongholds in response to Munich. The rest of the operations were conducted by the Mossad outside of the Middle East with far less positive results.

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IV. ENDSTATE AND CONSIDERATIONS

> We uphold our most cherished values not only because doing so is right, but because it strengthens our country and keeps us safe. Time and again, our values have been our best national security asset – in war and peace, in times of ease, and in eras of upheaval. Fidelity to our values is the reason why the United States of America grew from a small string of colonies under the writ of an empire to the strongest nation in the world.[142]

This chapter focuses on the considerations that national decision makers face when evaluating the efficacy of a proposed covert or clandestine action. The list of considerations could be endless; however this thesis groups the consideration into three broad categories: the national goals, the moral consistency, and lastly the political risks. The intent of this chapter is to establish an intellectual framework that enables effective analysis of Israel's actions. The chapter establishes that the conceptual endstate conditions that a political leader desires should be the first consideration and be reflected clearly in the subsequent national goals which will drive covert or clandestine actions. Those goals, when supported by an effective strategy, should be accomplished in a manner that is consistent with the core values of the society. The clandestine nature of the tactics used to achieve the goals should never deviate from the moral justification used to justify the national goals. The lesson of history is that covert and clandestine actions often become public knowledge and democratic leaders will be judged by their own society. Lastly, political risk is inherent in all covert or clandestine actions and the outcomes of any operation may have unanticipated consequences that although usually politically survivable may still be undesirable. The nation's leaders must apply an evaluative process to determine if the actions are achieving the desired effects and adapt the strategy as conditions change.

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[142] President Barack Obama, National Archives, May 21, 2009. This quote is also found on page 35 of the May 2010 National Security Strategy.

A. START AT THE END

The first consideration should always be the endstate.[143] The proposed action is after all only a vehicle by which some higher purpose is achieved. In this regard, policy makers can look to modern military planners for tools to develop a successful covert or clandestine mission profile that will support the nation's goals. In the U.S. military the commander is either given a mission by a higher authority or quite often is simply faced with a problem in his immediate operating environment that must be addressed. The commander, aided by his staff, immediately defines the problem through in-depth analysis and then develops a concept of what he wants the environment that his unit is operating in to be after the problem is resolved. In military terms this is the commander's desired endsate and it includes the status of the enemy, the friendly forces and the environment. The military definition of endstate is primarily applied to tactical outcomes, but can still be applied to strategic planning if the political and social dimensions are included. The military staff's job is to then take the problem statement and the commander's desired endstate and develop multiple courses of action that would solve the problem, identifying the risks and costs associated with each. Essentially, the military starts by defining the problem and then jumps to the other end of the timeline and imagines a world were that problem is either eliminated or reduced to a manageable level. The process is called, quite plainly, "The Military Decision Making Process" or MDMP.[144]

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143 "Endstate" is derived from multiple U.S. military doctrinal manuals. See U.S. Army Field Manual 5–0 and 6–0. The following excerpt from FM 5–0 (2005 edition) explains endstate as a part of the commander's visualization process that drives staff planning:

1–34. Commander's visualization is the mental process of achieving a clear understanding of the force's current state with relation to the enemy and environment (situational understanding), and developing a desired end state that represents mission accomplishment and the key tasks that move the force from its current state to the end state (commander's intent) (FM 6–0). Commander's visualization (see Figure 1–2) is a way of mentally viewing the dynamic relationship among Army forces, enemy forces, and the environment at the present while conducting operations against an opposing force over time.

144 Definition of MDMP derived from U.S. Army Field Manual FM 5–0 (2010 edition), 3–1:

The case studies selected for this thesis show both positive and negative examples of effective decision making processes where leaders were faced with a problem, visualized a desired endstate, and then implemented a plan that would achieve it with acceptable costs and risks. In the case of Adolf Eichmann, the problem was one of Israel's moral obligations to seek justice and contribute to a sense of closure for an entire nation that could be found bringing one of the most notorious Nazis to justice. There was no national security interest at stake with regard to Eichmann, but there was a moral imperative to act. In envisioning the endstate, PM Ben-Gurion and Isser Harel both recognized that merely killing Eichmann, while it may satisfy a personal sense of revenge for those involved in the mission or those affected by the holocaust, would never achieve the higher moral purpose. The true national goal was a public justice based on the precedent established during the Nuremburg trials after World War II. Any covert action that resulted in Eichmann's death, while it probably would not have incurred any greater political risk, would have undermined the national objective and clearly not supported the Prime Minister's desired endstate. Additionally, the endstate envisioned by PM Ben-Gurion was well conceived with regard to compliance with his own people's cultural values. Public support for the trial was overwhelming and at the same time little domestic scrutiny was applied to the veracity of the government's official cover story regarding Eichmann's apprehension. While it is clear that Ben-Gurion and his staff underestimated the depth of pro-fascist influences in Argentine politics, the domestic social and political gains inside Israel, resulting from Eichmann's trial, far outweighed the political risks of broken Argentine-Israeli relations.

In the Wrath of God vignette, the endstate was less clear. The mixing of deterrence along with an Old Testament based "eye for an eye" style of justice

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3–1. The military decision making process is a planning model that establishes procedures for analyzing a mission, developing, analyzing, and comparing courses of action against criteria of success and each other, selecting the optimum course of action, and producing a plan or order. The MDMP applies across the spectrum of conflict and range of military operations. Commanders with an assigned staff use the MDMP to organize their planning activities, share a common understanding of the mission and commander's intent, and develop effective plans and orders.

seems misplaced. There was no evidence to support the notion that symbolic killings of PLO middle men in Europe would achieve any deterrent effect. In fact, the similar assassinations carried out years earlier by Unit 101 demonstrated that the Palestinians were likely to increase their use of terror attacks in response. A revenge based justice did resonate with a large segment of the population, but it had no deterrent effect.

Many political theorists and intelligence analysts today would agree that assassination usually serves to harden the resolve of terror organizations, especially ones with significant popular support, such as the PLO. Max Abrahm's study of terrorist motivations supported the notion of social solidarity with similarly affected people as a prime motivation for group cohesion.[145] Abrahm's theory seems to fit well with stateless Palestinian diaspora living in refugee camps. The death of Palestinians at the hands of Israelis was also common place. Eleven more names added to the obituaries seemed inconsequential when hundreds were dying annually on each side. Similarly, Jenna Jordan's study indicates that leadership decapitation can result in the dissolution of some terror groups, but only if the group is young and small in size.[146] Jordan further notes that in her study of 298 groups, the older and larger groups actually became more cohesive if their leaders had been targeted.[147]

The PLO, was new in name only, and the force that Israel was fighting in a strategic context was the militant arm of Palestinian et large supported by several Arab nations. There is an argument that if enough PLO operatives and planners were killed, they simply would not have enough infrastructure to function. Jordan's research supports that the most effect use of targeted killings is based on modern Social Network Theory analysis where individuals who maintain key

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[145] Max Abrahms, "What Terrorist Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," International Security, 32, no.4 (Spring 2008), 79.

[146] Jenna Jordan, "When Heads Roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation" *Security Studies*, 18 (2009), 719.

[147] Jordan, "When Heads Roll," 723.

relationship roles in the organization are targeted.[148] If BSO where an isolated organization and not a guise used by Fatah and PFLP, killing key individuals in BSO may have worked; however even the value of several of the targets selected with respect to Wrath of God is questionable. Israeli leaders knew that King Husayn had severely diminished the PLO's militant strength in 1970. Israeli leaders were not, however, aware that the PLO had rebuilt their fighting forces by 1972 and with several hundred-thousand disenfranchised Palestinian refugees still in camps, the PLO had a practically limitless supply of recruits. The PLO had also demonstrated its ability to turn tactical losses into propaganda gains amongst its constituents. Israeli violence against the PLO bolstered PLO recruiting and in most cases, emboldened the different PLO militant factions, who were already competing amongst each other for primacy in the militant struggle against Israel.[149]

The prevention goal, tied to killing key operational members of the PLO such as the Red Prince was a far better goal, especially if the desired endstate was a world where PLO was not able to plan and execute effective terror attacks. It seemed that effective prevention was sidetracked during Wrath of God, or at least subjugated below the symbolic killings in Rome, Paris, and elsewhere. The initial targets were of questionable relevance to ongoing terror plots, but Israel was focused on sending a message to the PLO. The message Israel thought they were sending was one of deterrence. In fact, the message had the opposite effect and the violence escalated.

Spring of Youth, ironically, was effective in sending a message of deterrence to the Palestinian youth in Lebanon while also creating a severe disruptive effect to the PLO's current portfolio of clandestine militant operations.. The problem with prevention is that it is very difficult to measure success unless one knows of a specific impending attack. The documents seized during the

[148] Jordan, "When Heads Roll," 722.

[149] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 307–311.

Spring of Youth raid gave Israel a glimpse of the PLO's plans. No other Wrath of God operation even attempted to collect intelligence information about PLO activities or intentions.

In the end, Israel's lack of clear goals lead to the implementation of covert action campaign that became the goal in of itself instead of part to a larger strategy. Simply killing people on the list became the goal and the strategic effects of those missions in the context of overall Israeli security was not considered. The singular focus on the mission, instead of the strategic endstate, also distracted Israel from watching its Arab neighbors and resulted in the surprise attack by Egypt and Syria on October 6th, 1973. Had Israel been focused on achieving an endstate with their covert assassination campaign, they would have realized early that killing low level PLO functionaries was not preventing terror attacks. Israel would then have been in position to either abandon the effort or refocus its intelligence assets in the occupied territories and along its own borders in an effort to target PLO leaders and key facilitators actively engaged in attacks planning against the Israeli population. The geographic refocus of intelligence assets alone would have reduced the likelihood that Egypt and Syria would be able to build up forces along Israel's borders without being noticed. Additionally, Israel never considered a collaborative approach to neutralizing PLO attacks in Europe. Israeli intelligence of PLFP and Fatah operations and personnel could have been helpful to Greece, Italy and other nations that fell prey to aircraft hijackings and other attacks. Israel's unilateral approach to counterterrorism operations excluded the possibilities of teaming with host nations to increase resources and support for counterterrorism based on mutual goals of security and public safety.

Israel's singular focus on the task of checking names off of a "kill list" blinded her leaders from establishing mission termination criteria that accounted for the possibility that the covert actions might not work in achieving the combined desired goals of deterrence, justice and prevention. A strategic analysis that defined a clear endstate, determined viable ways to achieve it, and

used all means possible (not just covert killings) could have achieved far better results and potentially prevented Israel from being too distracted to notice the Egyptian and Syrian troop movements along their borders in the days prior to the Yom Kippur War. In a 2009 article in the Joint Forces Quarterly, Derek Reveron and James Cook offer a simple "Ends, Ways and Means" framework for strategic planners[150]

Had Israel picked only one goal (end), let's say prevention, the same strategic analysis could have allowed a better strategy to be developed that would have targeted the PLO's militant leaders and key nodes based on social network analysis. Targeting with appropriate methods (ways) and resources (means) would have minimized the potential of the entire Israeli security establishment becoming blinded to the larger movements of Egyptian and Syrian forces along Israel's borders in the weeks before the surprise attack on Yom Kippur.

B. ETHICS OF COVERT ACTIONS

A national decision maker's job, especially in a democracy, is to represent the will of the people and implement policy that reflects the nation's values. Leaders may be tempted to view covert actions as a means to avoid criticism and bearing the accountability for decision, but as former Senate Intelligence committee advisor Gregory Treverton points out, most covert actions are eventually discovered and using them [covert actions] as a way to avoid making a more difficult, yet morally defensible choice, is inherently flawed.[151] Treverton goes on to point out that government leaders seem to ignore historical lessons about covert actions:

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[150] An excellent description of "Ends, Ways, Means" analysis applied to national security strategy is found at in the Article 'Developing Strategists' in the Joint Forces Quarterly publication of the National Defense University: Derek S. Reveron and James L. Cook, "Developing Strategists: Translating National Strategy into Theater Strategy" *Joint Forces Quarterly,* 55 (4th Quarter 2009). accessed at: http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/images/jfq-55/4.pdf

[151] Gregory F. Treverton, "The Ethics of Covert Intervention," *International Journal*, 43, no.2 (Spring 1988), 302–303.

> What is striking about that history of American covert action is the repeated presumption of decision-makers that the operations would remain secret. That made it tempting to ignore longer-term costs and to evade ethical questions. The costs, and the dilemmas, even if they are recognized, might never have to be borne or resolved. Yet history teaches that they probably will be borne. In all likelihood, the operation will become known, and America will be judged for having undertaken it. So the record shows. ..[152]

Treverton's essay about ethics focused on larger covert interventions such as Angola in 1975 and the Iran-Contra affair in the 1980s. The lessons about not using covert or clandestine means to side step ethical and moral considerations is still equally applicable to the smaller more decisive covert actions discussed in this thesis.

Regardless of what moral theory a person subscribes to, the applied ethics used to justify an action must be consistent with the nation's core values. Anything less than a consistent and sound moral argument will open the door to political attack and social criticism. The long term impacts of improper normative assessment may include damage to the government's credibility amongst the domestic population as well as the international community. Eroded credibility equates to diminished trust between the government and its stake holders and ultimately reduces the government's effectiveness. The effect of such internal strife may result in a loss of confidence in the government by the people and will be reflected in election results.

Moral consistency applies equally to: 1) matching a national policy goal to the nation's values and 2) applying moral guidelines throughout the process used to achieve those goals, whether that process is overt, covert or mixture of methods. This first statement is a denouncement of 'the ends justify the means' approach to justifying covert action. The recommended approach to defensible moral calculus for covert actions should likely be viewed as a moral realist stance in general, though the metaethics to the approach are not crucial and perhaps a

[152] Treverton, "The Ethics of Covert Intervention," 303.

consistent moral relativism could be accomodated. More relevant, however, is that the recommended approach excludes a purely consequentialist viewpoint where the outcome of the covert action determines whether it was morally right or wrong. The moral relativist would say that one's own social and culture context determines morality.

This viewpoint would support a nation looking after its own interests while at the same time subscribing to an internally relevant moral code. A moral realist approach, of course, would contend that the moral code in question should be applied universally, beyond merely the scope of the given state.. The consequentialist would certainly affirm that the ends always justify the means, no matter how brutal or distasteful the means may be. This view seems short sighted and does not account for the fact those most citizens live by some moral code and similarly expect their government to apply morality in governance as well.

The most difficult problem for consequentialism in this case is the fact that, by definition, an action that failed to achieve the desired effect would be deemed immoral. A government would simply never take the risk of covert actions, unless it were almost negligible, since any compromise of the government sponsorship for an action would be a failure and therefore morally wrong. The secrecy afforded a covert action or clandestine mission should not create an exception to the rule of morally consistent policy. For the sake of this thesis the term 'moral consistency' best suits the analysis. Moreover, a non-consequentialist normative approach to such moral grounding would best fit with the recommendation presented in this thesis.

During Wrath of God, the policy goals established by Golda Meir were muddled and promoted a method that favored symbolic violence that looked more like terrorism rather than a well-articulated and morally consistent systemic approach to achieving a clear endstate. PM Meir was emotionally compromised by her own biases regarding Jews killed on German soil reminiscent of holocaust days. The similarly emotional public sentiment that openly called for "personal

terrorism" to combat the growing Palestinian threat reinforced PM Meir's position. Further codifying the popular appeal of a fight fire with fire strategy was the popularity of *The Book of the Paratroopers* published in 1969 with some sponsorship of the IDF Parachute Brigade. The book chronicles the terror reprisal attacks conducted by Unit 101 where entire Arab tribes were targeted in response to terror attacks. The book praised Unit 101's actions as 'heroic' while at the same time describing the slaughter of entire groups of Arabs, including civilians, in great detail.[153] That fact that terror attacks against Israelis increased steadily during Unit 101's four years of 'an eye for an eye' operations seemed to go unnoticed amongst the Israeli public and her leaders alike. The public and the political leadership in Israel were caught up in a swelling emotional tidal wave after the Munich massacre, thus inhibiting the clear thinking required to establish morally defensible goals supported by a consistent strategy.

Wrath of God needed a specific and consistent framework for the both the moral and legal justification; either a military or a judicial basis for action. The justice goal established by PM Meir required a judicial approach. Subsequently, in order to achieve justice, Israel would have been obligated to apprehend those suspected to be responsible for the Munich massacre. After an arrest, the suspects should have been tried in an Israeli court and sentenced in accordance with the verdict and Israeli law. The Israeli people were denied public justice, the accused were denied the right to face their accusers and prove their innocence. Even a more simplistic "Eye for an Eye" biblical approach to justice would have demanded that Israel prove beyond doubt the complicitness of each target on the kill list with the Munich massacre before the operation was conducted. The secrecy of committee X's selection process made it difficult for the Israeli government to justify its actions by satisfying the burden of proof. A traditional Just War Theory approach to countering the PLO under the terms of a 'Just War' would have provided Israel with a moral framework to approach the problem of

153 "After Munich: Israel Debates the Response," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 2, no.2 (Winter, 1973),142–143. accessed 4 March 2013 at: www.jstor.org/stable/2535488

PLO terrorism.[154] Whether the primary goal was justice or prevention, a Just War Theory approach would have provided a justification for killing PLO terrorists provided that Israel could prove those targeted were either planning an eminent attack or were directly responsible for one. According to Just War theory, Israel's obligation was also to seek other means of administering justice and resorting to targeted killing only as a last resort.[155] The Just War framework also had the benefit of being the basis for international armed conflict laws codified after World War II in the Geneva Convention. If applied correctly, the Just War approach would have lead Israel to a course of action with greater international legitimacy and moral consistency.

Operation Eichmann provided an example of a goal of justice supported by a clandestine operation to apprehend the suspect and then try him in a court of law. The Eichmann apprehension was conducted as a clandestine mission in lieu of a political request for extradition for pragmatic reasons and based on recent precedent established by Germany's failed attempt to extradite Dr. Mengele. While the circumstances of Eichmann's arrest were an area of contention between Israel and Argentina, the fact the Eichmann was a wanted criminal implicated with crimes against humanity was clear. If Israeli leaders believed there was a reasonable chance that the Argentinians would have arrested and extradited Eichmann, the chances are that Ben-Gurion would have engaged them politically. There was a moral justification for trying Eichmann and Israel's choice to apprehend him, in light of the pro-Nazi sympathies in Argentina, was warranted. Had Israel simply assassinated him, denying him the right to a trial, then the action would have been both unjust and morally inconsistent with the goal and the nation's values as a free democratic society.

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[154] For an overview of Just War Theory see Brian Orend's article titled "War":

Brian Orend, "War," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2008). accessed on 5 May, 2013 at: http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/war/>.

[155] David L. Perry, "Repugnant Philosopy: Ethics, Espionage, and Covert Action," *Journal of Conflict Studi*es (Spring 1995). accessed on 15 May, 2013 at: http://home.earthlink.net/~davidlperry/covert.htm.

The singular merit of Wrath of God, which should have been the framework for the entire operation, was the moral justification for prevention as demonstrated by Operation Spring of Youth. The goals in regard to Spring of Youth were preventive in nature regarding the PLO's comprehensive militant activities and active threat of unjust harm. Hence, the primary moral justification for the operation was in alignment with the classic justification basis of 'Just War'. For this reason, two key military commanders were targeted. The PLO spokesman was targeted because of his role in fulfilling the propaganda mandate of the PLO's terrorism campaigns. In military terms, the PLO spokesman was conducting information operations, a critical component to political violence. The moral justification for targeting specific PLO officials under a Just War framework was sound. The Israeli government also ensured that proportionality and minimal collateral damage was inflicted during the operation. The decision to send their most elite unit on a discreet raid with a clandestine infiltration after weeks of rehearsals minimized the chances of an unanticipated gun battle in the streets of Beirut that would have resulted in civilian casualties. The result of the operation was that minimal lives were lost on both sides and Israel still achieved both its tactical objectives and strategic goal of prevention.

In contrast to Spring of Youth, the Lillehammer mission represented a moral failing in the consistent application of appropriate methods to achieve the military goal. From prevention perspective, the intended target at Lillehammer (the Red Prince) was a valid military target and would have been consistent with a Just War framework.[156] Israel failed to apply moral consistentency during the mission by hastily assembling a team that lacked the experience, expertise and skills required to conduct such a sensitive operation. In a critical failure of

[156] Traditional Just War Theory makes a distinction between *prevention* and *imminent unjust harm*, the latter being a specific known threat and a justifiable cause for war. In regards to Israel's notion of prevention, the militant arm of the PLO had several specific operations in various stages of development aimed at killing Israelis that were thwarted, as referenced earlier, by Operation Spring of Youth. Prevention as it related to Spring of Youth was synonymous with *imminent unjust harm* described by in Orend in his Just War Theory article at: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/war/

judgement, likely excasterbated by the excitement associated with such a rare opportunity to kill a high priority target, Michael Harrari took for granted that his surveillance team lacked the experience needed to assess the target and determine if it really was Salameh. The fact that the suspect had ridden a bicycle from the café back to a quiet residential neighborhood earlier in the day did not fit the profile of Salameh, the chosen successor of Yassir Arafat and a well-known for his expensive tastes and playboy lifestyle.

Similarly, when the suspect was seen leaving a movie theater with a pregnant woman and then the two boarded a public bus together should have caused the entire surveillance team to pause and reconsider. Harrari, as the head of the famed Mossad Caesara unit was fully aware that his team selection and overall mission support were rushed and generally less than adequate for such a sensitive mission. While tactical objective and strategic goals had a defensible moral justification, the mission execution was sloppy, unprofessional and exuded overconfidence. Israel's moral obligation, in light of the fact that they intended to violate a neutral nations sovereignty to kill another human being, was to undertake the covert mission with gravity, seriousness and the highest level of effort possible to ensure success and negate the chance for collateral damage. Israel's last moral failing during operation Lillehammer was with respect to their own Mossad agents, all of whom were left in Norway to stand trial and serve subsequent prison sentences. Even if there was a moral justification for abandoning patriotic citizens committed to a life of high risk service to their country, the fact that Israel's de facto policy was to regard any compromised agent as 'expendable' was probably quite destructive to agency moral and recruiting potential.

C. POLITICAL RISKS AND THE AUDIENCE

It almost goes without saying that foreign policy is often driven by domestic opinion in a democratic state. The essence of audience costs is that public opinion forces leaders to commit to higher levels of violence in a conflict in

fear of looking weak in front of their domestic constituency. Audience costs represent a true political risk that cannot be denied. However, leaders must ensure that the fear of losing public support or even the next election does not drive an ineffective strategy.

Operation Wrath of God certainly had elements of audience costs that created a real political risk for PM Meir and her government. The fact is that public opinion varied, but for the most part, rested on the side of extreme measures or fighting fire with fire. One article in the Haaretz newspaper from September 8th stated "The only method to be adopted against these killers is that adoped by King Hussein, who knew them at close quarters – they must be annihilated and hunted doewn to the bitter end."[157] The same paper published bold statements a few days later espousing the adoption of terror tactics reminiscent of the tactics used against Arab commando leaders in the 1956 War to combat the Arab terrorists of the PLO: Personal terrorism outside the area will not solve everything, any more than raids by the Air Force on the saboteurs' bases in the Arab countries will solve everything. But if we do not adopt the method of personal terrorism against the leaders of the terrorists and killers we shall be deliberately throwing away our own weapons."[158] Reinforcing the media hype over a hardline response was the fact that several former members of the Haganah had already been arrested for transporting weapons to support independent attacks against the PLO. With the pressure mounting in the media, it appears that PM Meir and her staff became focused on the targeted killings as symbolic acts of retribution that would help to satisfy some of her critics in the Israeli population. The biblical approach of an "eye for eye" had long been a Jewish tactic against their Arab neighbors dating back to the Yishuv council and the Haganah days and the notion still had overwhelming support amongst the Israeli populace.

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157 "After Munich: Israel Debates the Response," 146.

158 Ibid.

The other audience to consider with respect to covert or clandestine missions is the audience in the affected territory. In the Eichmann case, PM Ben-Gurion demonstrated a lack of appreciation for the strong fascist sentiment in Argentina, especially amongst the dominant Catholic constituency and the Foreign ministry. PM Ben-Gurion decided not to include his Argentinian ambassador in the mission planning, a mistake that likely resulted in Israel concocting a feeble cover story about independent Israeli citizens tracking down Eichmann and asking him nicely to travel back to Israel for trial, which he of course agreed to. PM Ben-Gurion underestimated the public outcry amongst fascists in Argentina and the Argentine President's need to demonstrate some act of reprisal against Israel in order to pacify constituents and neutralize political enemies. Had Ben-Gurion included his Argentine experts in the planning, Israel may have contrived a more palatable cover story and thereby posed less of a threat to the Argentine President's political control and legitimacy.

D. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The moral considerations for covert HVI missions build the basis for a viable legal framework for such missions, particularly under the nation's right to self-defense in accordance with Just War theory and the Geneva conventions. While this thesis is not intended to be a debate on the internationally legality of HVI kill/capture missions, a nation undertaking such operations must considerthe international context of their operations. The mission to capture Adolf Eichmann was clearly in violation of Argentina's sovereignty; however, the fact that a legal precedent was established as a result of the Nuremburg trials for prosecution of Nazi war criminals gave Israel a defensible position with regard to continuing with Eichmann's trial and punishment instead of returning him to Argentina. International law is, however, constantly debated and typically is not a driving consideration with regard to covert or clandestine actions.

Although international law is not a primary concern with respect to covert action, establishing a sound legal basis for the action remains a prudent measure

in preparing responses to criticism in the international arena. The legal complexities are significant today and were likely similar to what Israel encountered in combatting the PLO. Both the U.S. and Israel chose not to sign Protocol 1 of the Geneva Convention IV, Article 3, thus denying acceptance of the provision that non-state groups have the right to fight against them.[159] Lisa Hajjar's essay on Israel and America's choice to similarly follow alternative interpretations of International Humanitarian Law in order to establish internal legal precedent in support of their respective wars on terror is testament to the fact that international law is not a primary concern with respect to covert actions.

Hajjar goes on to state that Israel's selective interpretation of the IHL provisions of the Geneva Convention have "been invoked to justify brutal interrogations, extrajudicial executions, and collective punishments for deterrence, reprisal, intelligence gathering, and prosecution."[160] After September 11, 2001 the U.S. congress conferred the Authorization for Use of Military Force to the executive branch enabling the U.S. military to kill or capture terrorists without a formal declaration of war and under the direction of the President. In November 2001, President Bush declared Al Qaida detainees to be "unlawful combatants" and therefore exempt from IHL prisoner of war status.[161] Both decisions reflected the necessity for America to react to the Al Qaida threat and the fact that current international and domestic laws did not offer clear guidance on how to address a stateless enemy such as Al Qaida.

In Israel's fight against PLO terror and the American fight against Al Qaida, the important legal consideration is really internalregarding the processes of government and internal legal oversight. A nation conducting lethal covert or clandestine missions should ensure that the same scrutiny applied to establish moral consistency is applied from a legal perspective. As noted by policy makers

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[159] Lisa Hajjar, "International Humanitarian Law and Wars on Terror: A Comparative Analysis of Israeli and American Doctrines and Policies," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 36, no.1 (Autumn 2006), 25.

[160] Lisa Hajjar, "International Humanitarian Law and Wars on Terror," 26.

[161] Lisa Hajjar, "International Humanitarian Law and Wars on Terror," 30–31.

in the U.S. National Counterterrorism Strategy, counterterror operations immediately after September 11, 2001 were conducted "in an environment of legal uncertainty in which long-established legal rules were applied to circumstances not seen before in this country."[162] The focus of the legal aspects of the U.S. strategy is not to convince the world that the U.S. position is correct, but to establish a sound argument on "a solid legal footing" within a legal framework that is "both effective and durable."[163] The same document establishes the legal goals of the framework are the ability to "withstand legal challenge, survive scrutiny and earn the support of Congress and the American people as well as our partners and allies."[164] The U.S. policy has not sidestepped the issues of legality, but pragmatically noted that they are difficult and the most important aspect is soundness of a legal argument that has domestic political backing.

Leaders owe their subordinates the due diligence to ensure that the missions they undertake are both legal and ethical according to domestic law and social values. Israel was operating in new terrain both conceptually and physically with regard to covert actions in Europe against the PLO. There was no legal review process in place to provide oversight to government sponsored missions. PM Meir and General Yahriv established committee X as an ad hoc body to provide both direction and oversight of the missions. The committee was self-regulating. The lack of true impartial legal oversight was itself a risk for PM Meir. There is no evidence to suggest that Wrath of God was illegal according to Israeli law; however there was also no official policy or legal ruling establishing the actions as specifically legal. The missions were legally ambiguous and therefore executed with the full risk assumed by PM Meir and the executive branch. After the debacle at Lillehammer and the surprise attack by Arab

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[162] National Strategy for Counterterrorism, 6.

[163] Ibid.

[164] Ibid.

neighbors on Yom Kippur in 1973, PM Meir's Labor party lost supporters to the new conservative Likud party and PM Meir stepped down.

Recognizing the imperfect nature of the legal structures of the day, Thomas Jefferson wrote several letters both defending his actions in assuming authorities outside of his constitutional mandate and at the same time, cautioning against the practice:

> The question you propose, whether circumstances do not sometimes occur, which make it a duty in officers of high trust, to assume authorities beyond the law, is easy of solution in principle, but sometimes embarrassing in practice. A strict observance of the written laws is doubtless *one* of the high duties of a good citizen, but it is not *the highest*. The laws of necessity, of self-preservation, of saving our country when in danger, are of higher obligation. To lose our country by a scrupulous adherence to written law, would be to lose the law itself, with life, liberty, property and all those who are enjoying them with us; thus absurdly sacrificing the end to the means[165]

The quote from Jefferson is in reference to his unilateral decision to commit the nation to the Louisiana Purchase without the prior approval from Congress and furthermore without even tacit statutory authority from the constitution. Jefferson cited several examples of military action under extreme circumstances as examples of scenarios that warranted discretion and adherence to moral values over strict legal interpretation. Jefferson, an astute legal scholar and strict constructionalist, fully realized that the documents crafted less than 20 years prior and intended to guide nation's leaders, were not written in anticipation of the entire spectrum of possible scenarios that the nation's leaders may face. That level of forsight was simply impossible.

The lesson from Jefferson is that eventually leaders will face challenges that are unprecedented and legal constructs will not neatly provide guidance for action. In those cases, leaders should be guided by the values of the nation and their own sound judgement with the nation's best interests in mind. Jefferson also

[165] Thomas Jefferson. "A Letter to John B. Colvin," September 20, 1810. accessed at: http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/letter-to-john-b-colvin/.

astutely noted that leaders can still suffer dire political consequences even with the best of intentions in mind, but that risk is outweighed by the leader's obligation to do what is best for the nation at all times.

Political risk and the moral and legal considerations are tightly woven together, particularly in the realm of covert and clandestine actions to kill or capture high-value targets. Jefferson's guidance applies equally to Israeli leaders in the 1960s and 70s as well as to U.S. leaders today. Decisions to act must be guided by a hierarchy of considerations, foremost being the overall welfare of the nation. The nation's welfare is based on preservation of moral values equally as it based on protection from physical threats. National security and values are inseperable:

> We are committed to upholding our most cherished values as a nation not just because doing so is right but also because doing so enhances our security. Adherence to those core values – respecting human rights, fostering good governance, respecting privacy and civil liberties, committing to security and transparency, and upholding the rule of law – enables us to build broad international coalitions to act against the common threat posed by our adversaries while further delegitimizing, isolating, and weakening their efforts.[166]

The implications of the U.S. CT strategy above are far reaching with respect to the appropriate ways and means by which the CT strategy is implemented. That said, if the strategy has a clear endstate supported by a well-articulated strategy that encompasses all elements of national power implemented by dedicated and courageous citizens, then the author believes success is inevitable.

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[166] *National Strategy For Counterterrorism*, 4.

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V. CONCLUSION

This thesis is intended to be prescriptive in nature. The value of Israel's historic High Value Individual (HVI) operations for American leaders are in regard to: 1) general political and ideological similarities between the United States and Israel, 2) the environmental circumstances that warrant the use of the nation's covert and clandestine capabilities, and lastly 3) the universality and timelessness of strategic planning. While there are many differences between the U.S. and Israel, the key similarities that are relevant to covert and clandestine activities are the common democratic social and political foundations and the will to use military and intelligence assets to conduct HVI operations. The environmental conditions that drove Israeli leaders to consider covert HVI operations, namely PLO terrorists operating in friendly third countries, are similar to today's environment of transnational terrorism dominated by Al Qaeda and its affiliates. The strategic planning fundamentals to address PLO threats of the 1970s and the threats posed by the Al Qaeda franchise today are similar. Those strategic plans may find covert and clandestine HVI operations to be integral ways of accomplishing the strategic goals. The goals may also be better accomplished at times by other ways and means or more often than not, a blended approach that employs the full spectrum of national capabilities. In any case, covert and clandestine efforts come with risks and should be used only when deemed effective, ethical and prudent.

The following steps are recommended as a general policy planning framework to ensure that covert or clandestine actions properly support national goals and are nested in a comprehensive strategy:

1. Define the Problem

While this may sound like a simple step, a proper analysis of the problem is critical to developing realistic goals and sound strategy. Most important to defining the problem is gathering as much information as possible. In the

Eichmann case, the information gathering effort focused on confirming Eichmann was alive and then where he was. It took years for Israel to confirm that Eichmann was living in Argentina. After confirming Eichmann's location, Israel should have gathered more information about the political and social environment in Argentina in order to understand the strategic context that would drive post-operations responses. In regards to Wrath of God, Israel was caught by surprise during the Munich massacre. Israel had very little information about the true nature, size and capability of the PLO terror network. Wrath of God was conceived and implemented only a few weeks after Munich. The Wrath of God plan was rushed and based on limited information. The plan reflected the fact that Israeli leaders clearly underestimated the scope of the PLO's secret militant and intelligence network.

Besides gathering information on hostile actors, Israel should have analyzed the root causes for the PLO actions, which were based in the disenfranchised Palestinian population. Had Israel truly assessed the root causes for Palestinian violence, other strategic efforts may have been developed that could have reduced the base motivation for Palestinian anger towards Israel. Certainly the sickness and food shortages inside the refugee camps were at least contributory to the overall anti-Israeli Palestinian mindset. The large Palestinian refugee population provided the PLO with a practically limitless supply of recruits. While targeted killings may still have been part of a comprehensive strategy to eliminate terror attacks against Israelis, the Israeli government would have been better served by offering political and economic solutions to the PLO that would have improved the living conditions for average Palestinians and provided a political voice to the PLO. Postulating on the possible 'whole of government' approaches that Israel could have taken is a thesis of its own and beyond the scope of this effort; however it is worth noting that there are no indications that Israeli leaders ever considered anything beyond an offensive military strategy to address Palestinian violence. The Israeli approach to a complex problem with

clear socio-economic dimensions was self-limited and exceptionally narrow in its scope.

2. Establish a Clear Endstate

Probably the most critical step in regard to developing a strategy and supporting tactical plans is the endstate. The endstate must take into account the environment, both domestic and international. From the endstate, specific goals can be derived and used as benchmarks during implementation of a subsequent strategy. In the Eichmann scenario the endstate was based on justice being served for the benefit of the holocaust survivors and the Israeli people as whole. Killing Eichmann, while justifiable to many, would have undermined public justice based on Israel's democratic roots and the precedent set by the Nuremburg trials. Prime Minister Ben-Gurion envisioned an endstate where the older generation of holocaust survivors would feel redeemed by a trial reminiscent of Nuremburg. At the same time, he saw the Eichmann trial as shaping the identity of Israel as a just nation for the benefit of the first generation of Israelis born after 1948. The endstate was clear; apprehend Eichmann and put him on trial, while minimizing the negative impacts on Israeli-Argentina relations.

After Munich, PM Meir defined an endstate where Israelis were safe from terrorism but she also directed that biblically consistent "eye for an eye" justice be conducted against persons responsible for Munich. In her endstate, PM Meir also directed a tactical plan of targeted killings. The plan became the endstate for those conducting it and success was measured merely as a consequence of whether the targets were killed or not. Israeli leaders failed to define endstate conditions that planners could have then used to establish goals and a supporting strategy. The author attributes Israel's muddled endstate and subsequent contrary goals to an emotionally compromised small group of Israeli leaders centered on PM Meir. Had Israeli leaders approached the Palestinian problem more holistically and with a balanced perspective that accounted for root

causes behind Palestinian aggression toward Israel, a better endstate might have been visualized.

3. Develop a Strategy

A strategy is driven by the endstate and requires clearly defined goals. Once the endstate is clear and goals in place, the planners should consider a strategy that encompasses all of the instruments of national power to achieve those goals. Today we use the DIME model: Dimplomatic, Information, Military, Economic to characterize the instruments of national power. Israeli strategies selected for this thesis neglected diplomatic or economic elements. Could Israel have offered Argentina economic incentives to arrest and extradite Eichmann? Certainly Argentina was motivated by economic growth when allowing Nazis to emigrate after WWII. German engineering and scientific knowledge was critical to Argentina's industrial, military and energy growth during the 1950s. Could Israel have offered the PLO a political roadmap to statehood in order to stop guerilla attacks?

By 1968, Yassir Arafat had risen to the top position in the Palestine National Council and by 1972 was aggressively working to consolidate his control over the fractured Palestinian groups represented by the PLO. Had Israel offered to guarantee Arafat's role as Palestinian 'President' in a new Palestinian state, a more effective 'carrot and stick' strategy might have worked to ensure Israeli safety and eliminate the Palestinian refugees' most basis motivation for joining the militant struggle against Israel. From an overarching strategy, specific plans can be developed that achieve all or part of specified goals. Those plans represent the operational efforts and tactical actions that support a strategy. Killing Wael Zwaiter was a tactical action that, when viewed as a singular event, was neither supportive of nor detrimental to achieving Israel's goals. The PLO was able to use Zwaiter's death as a propaganda tool to increase support amongst Palestinians for militant attacks against Israel. Israel's tactical action became the PLO's strategic success. A good strategy includes tactical plans and

actions and beyond. A strategy includes information campaigns and looks at the possible results of any specific actions in context of the overall environment and whether the action is likely to bring the actor closer to achieving his endstate or not. Leaders must ensure that a tactic, such as targeted killings or drone strikes, does not become a default strategy. Key in the strategy is ensuring that the nation's core values are preserved throughout. No arm of national power should be tasked to act, whether overtly or in secret, in a manner that is not consistent with national values.

As previously noted in the 2011 National Strategy for Counterterrorism, preserving national values is not only consistent with our efforts to secure the nation, it is a source of strength; the two ideals are, from an American perspective, inseparable. Ideally, all actions taken should be expressly legal as well under domestic law to protect the actors and fortify the sound defense of those actions should they become a matter of public controversy. Due to the complexity of international law and varying opinions, it may not be reasonable to expect broad-based international support for every effort undertaken to pursue national interests. Domestic support is, however, an important factor and compliance with domestic law is an important step to maintaining internal support. As the National CT strategy noted, a measure of legal ambiguity existed regarding the U.S. responses to the September 2011 terror attacks. While considerable headway has been made to establish a durable legal framework consistent with American values in support of counterterrorism operations, there is clearly more work to be done. The Usama Bin Laden raid in Abbottobad, Pakistan in May 2011 was conducted with a blend of U.S. Title 50 and Title 10 authorities in a manner that was technically not required. As Joseph Berger points out, the raid was conducted by U.S. military forces under the authority and control of the director of the Central Intelligence Agency.[167] In reality, the CIA director had no real control over the operation and the Department of Defense

167 Joseph B. Berger III, Covert Action: Title 10, Title 50, and the Chain of Command (Joint Forces Quarterly, Issue 67, 4th Quarter 2012: National Defense University), 32–38.

essentially 'borrowed' CIA's title 50 authority to conduct covert action. Berger points out that the President has the authority to appoint any Department or Agency to conduct covert action if he deems it necessary. Additionally, the U.S. Secretary of Defense has inherent authority under Title 50 of U.S. Code to conduct traditional military activities. A raid into Pakistan by U.S. Special Operations Forces was arguably a traditional military activity.[168] The legal construct for the UBL raid may still raise some questions for lawyers and critics, but the administration used current law to establish a legal framework for the operation. Most importantly, the operation itself accomplished a clear and long stated policy goal that was consistent with American values.

4. Execute the Mission(s)

Specific mission planning is the domain of the tactical experts. Leaders should ensure that agencies and departments are tasked within the scope of their areas of expertise and supported when necessary. This thesis is not intended to evaluate the tactical efforts of the Mossad or the Israeli Defense Forces. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the Spring of Youth mission combined intelligence and military assets according to their areas of expertise and achieved decisive tactical success. Spring of Youth was similar to the joint-interagency counterterrorism operations that have been conducted successfully by U.S. forces since 2001 and culminated with the killing of Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan in 2011, after ten years of exhaustive intelligence collection, analysis and planning.

5. Assess the Effects

Assessment of tactical actions and the strategy they support are two different things. While a tactical action can be evaluated based on whether a target was killed or captured and how many friendly forces or innocents were

168 For a thorough analysis on Covert Action versus Traditional Military Activities and their relationship with respect to U.S. Law see LTC Timothy C. Ladouceur's U.S. Army War College research project: Traditional Military Operations: A Legitimate Policy Alternative to Covert Action (U.S. Army War College, 1 May 2012).

killed in the process, the effectiveness of the strategy is not always easily measured by simple metrics. Israel achieved tactical success during most of the Wrath of God missions. But the strategy failed to deter PLO attacks and other than Spring of Youth, prevented very few planned attacks from occurring. Israel never established a measure of effectiveness to determine if its one-dimensional kill strategy was working with respect to achieving their goals. In developing a strategy, leaders must identify how they will measure whether it is being effective. Certainly the increase in violence by the PLO after each Wrath of God attack was a possible indicator that the strategy was not working.

6. Adjust the Plan or Strategy

Tactical plans must be altered as the situation changes. A tactical plan is not a script in play and the best plans are built to be flexible and account for contingencies. Similarly, a good strategy must allow for adaptation to changes in the environment. The desired endstate is what the strategy aims to achieve. The goals that are used to define the strategy and the milestones used as benchmark achievements to measure the performance of a strategy must be incrementally reviewed to determine if the strategy is working. All strategies and subsequent plans are built on incomplete and sometimes imperfect information. Military strategists would attribute this to the “fog of war” which is essentially everything we do not know about the environment and the enemy. As the strategy is implemented and milestones are reached, the effects of the various supporting actions should be critically reviewed. Planners must constantly seek to increase their information about the environment and the actors in it during the implementation of the strategy in order to reduce the fog of war and amend the strategy for maximum effectiveness. During operation Eichmann, the decision was made to plan a strategy without the input of the Israeli Ambassador to Argentina. The information that the strategy was built on was purposely curtailed and as a result the Israeli post-operations plan designed to mitigate political tensions with Argentina was ineffective. After the Argentine government denounced Israel’s ‘private citizen team’ cover story, Israel never amended their

plan to mitigate the political tensions. During Wrath of God, Israeli leaders never assessed whether their strategy was working toward achieving any of PM Meir's expressed goals. The frequency of violent attacks against Israeli citizens increased after Wrath of God was implemented. Additionally, PLO attacks become more audacious and focused against Israeli security and diplomatic officials, culminating with three explosive devices emplaced in New York City in March 1973 intended to kill PM Meir herself. In spite of the PLO's violent responses to Wrath of God, the plan continued until July 1973 when the entire operation was exposed in Lillehammer.

The chart in **Figure 4** is a flow diagram that can be used as a simple strategic planning template. Clandestine and covert plans should only be executed as part of a larger strategy. The flow chart provides a step-by-step guide that incorporates the three strategic phases: Visualize, Design, and Evaluate. In the visualization phase, the problem facing the nation is defined, the leaders then elaborate a clear endstate, and specific goals are developed that characterize the endstate. In the design phase, a strategy is developed using appropriate ways and means within the DIME construct. From the overarching strategy, specific plans are developed to achieve incremental milestones that will lead to the strategic goals. In the evaluation phase, the plans are executed and data is gathered that regarding the measures of performance established during planning and the corresponding measures of effectiveness. The effects are then compared to the goals established in the endstate to determine if the strategy is working. The strategy or specific plans are revised as required to better support the endstate. This process continues until the endstate is achieved.

In the chart, HVI operations are linked to specific goals. Those goals are derived from and characterize an overall desired endstate. HVI missions reflect specific tactical plans created during directed planning in support of a national strategy and aimed to achieve milestones in support of one or more national goals.

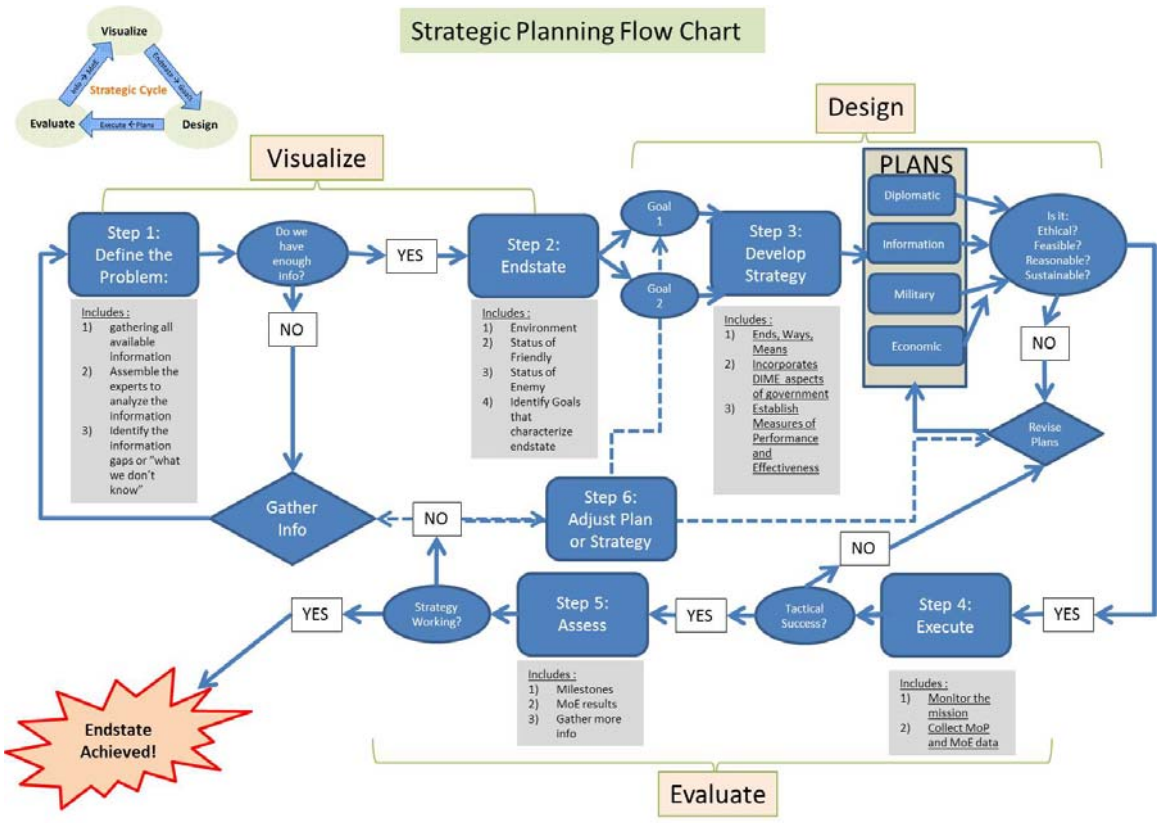

Figure 4. Strategic Planning Flow Chart

The lesson from Israel is that covert and clandestine HVI operations should be nested in a larger strategy that incorporates all relevant elements of national power aimed at achieving a desired endstate through a comprehensive, consistent and sound strategy. When viewed as part of a larger strategy, the results of any actions should be evaluated both tactically and also strategically. Leaders must assess how well the tactical plans support the strategy and also whether the strategy itself is moving the environmental conditions closer to the desired endstate. The endstate can be viewed at the right end of a timeline, with current conditions on the left. The strategy is the nation's plan to arrive at the desired endstate. The national goals should reflect logical milestones along that path. Covert and clandestine actions may, at times, be implemented as specific plans aimed at achieving selected goals. National leaders require evaluative

tools to measure performance of the strategy and also its effectiveness. Supporting plans may need to be incrementally altered or curtailed as their effectiveness is reviewed. Similarly the strategy as a whole should be reviewed, particularly if supporting plans are tactically successful but strategic goals are still not being met.

The Israeli leaders have often decided to use their considerable clandestine and covert mechanisms in order to achieve national goals. At times, covert means were used properly in support of a clear endstate, realistic goals and sound strategy. Similarly, the same means were misapplied in other situations and the leaders were held accountable to their constituents and the support of their respective parties in much the same manner as the U.S. leaders are today. During Operation Eichmann, PM Ben-Gurion envisioned a clear endstate of public justice for crimes against the Jewish people during the holocaust. That endstate was supported by one simple goal; arresting Adolf Eichmann in order for him to stand trial in Israel. The strategy, while it failed to fully consider and mitigate the Argentinian response and diplomatic crisis, was sound with regard to plan to capture Eichmann. The goals and the means to accomplish them were consistent with Israeli values and approached in a rational and critical manner. PM Meir failed to apply rational prudence in reacting to the Munich massacre and the perceived terror crisis that was embodied in BSO. She reacted emotionally to the popular media and established goals of symbolic violence that were not tied to a clear endstate.

Was the goal of Wrath of God deterrence of PLO sanctioned terror? Prevention of planned attacks by specific groups? Or simply retroactive street justice that the Israel populace had become accustomed to over decades of conflict with the Palestinian Arabs? The strategy required to accomplish one of these goals may not have supported the other. PM Meir needed to define the real problem(s) that Israel was facing; social unrest due to emotional outrage and a demand for justice, or the continued loss of Israeli lives due to growing capability, resolve and globally networked PLO terrorism? Once the problem was defined,

PM Meir could have envisioned the endstate she desired for the Israeli people. The subsequent tactical plan embodied in Wrath of God would have been one part of a ‘carrot and stick’ approach that offered a political and economic solution to the Palestinian people while at the same time held PLO leaders accountable for militant attacks.

Inevitably, the covert and clandestine activities of a nation become a matter of accountability, especially those actions aimed at killing or capturing HVI’s. National leaders who approve, plan and endorse such operations are accountable, in a democracy, to the people and the laws that govern them. While there is a measure of accountability to other nation-states affected by the actions, those concerns are largely a practical matter of risk calculation based on the durability of existing international relationships. The most pervasive risk is the domestic political one. Policy makers should not shy away from using all of the implements of national power to accomplish those goals worthy of the title ‘national priority’.

On the contrary, national leaders should seek to act boldly when the people’s security or the nation’s interests are at risk. Bold action must also be guided by sound reason, a well-articulated strategy and strict adherence to the nation’s values. The value of the goal [or target], does not warrant deviating from the nation’s values. Justice cannot be served by unjust acts and terror is not thwarted through acts of nationally sponsored terrorism. Killing or capturing the nation’s enemies, even via covert or clandestine means, can be both ethical and effective provided those actions are tied clearly established national goals as part of a well-articulated strategy that has undergone thorough analysis. The people have placed their trust in their elected officials and military leaders, expecting them to act responsibly and conscientiously on the nation’s behalf. With that in mind, those same leaders should act bravely and boldly to defend our nation and preserve its values.

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APPENDIX A. ISRAELI NAZI HUNTING EFFORTS

The reality is that Israel had put little effort, if any, into Nazi hunting after gaining independence from Britain in 1948. The young nation was just too busy trying to establish itself, build internal institutions and ward off real threats from its Arab neighbors.[169] From 1948 to 1956, Israel was in a near constant state of violent conflict with its Arab neighbors and dissidents inside the Palestinian enclaves in the region. Israel's intelligence services were therefore consumed with penetrating and neutralizing the Arab threat, along with maintaining a vigilant watch on the growing internal threat posed by the Israeli communist movement.[170] The government was also overwhelmed with waves of Jewish immigrants arriving daily from all over Europe. Within a few years of independence from Britain, Israel's population had doubled.[171]

Although hunting Nazi war criminals was not a state priority, much of the Israeli population was comprised of people directly affected by the war. The collective business of building and securing the new nation and the individual focus on rebuilding families was simply an all-encompassing task. Only after Fritz Bauer, a Jewish prosecutor in West Germany, received a tip from a friend in Argentina in 1957, did the whereabouts of Adolf Eichmann become a state issue for Israel. Fritz's friend Lothar Hermann, a retired half-Jew living in Argentina, believed that his daughter had made the acquaintance of Adolf Eichmann's son. Lothar wrote to his friend Fritz and Fritz in turn approached the Israeli government, believing that Germany was not interested in hunting Nazi's and only Israel had a true stake in bringing people like Eichmann to justice.[172] The information on Eichmann was passed to Walter Eytan, Director-General of the

169 Rein, Argentina, *Israel, and the Jews*. 163.

170 Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, 68–133.

171 Yoblonka and Cummings, "State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann," 11–12.

172 Rein, *Argentina, Israel, and the Jews*, 164.

Ministry of Foreign Affaris, who in turn called Isser Harel, chief of the Mossad.[173] Harel knew full well that the people of Israel had not forgotten the atrocities suffered in the concentration camps and thanks to enterprising independent Nazi hunters like Simon Wiesenthal, the Israeli government had substantial historic files relating to key Nazi's like Eichmann. Zvi Aharoni, the chief of Mossad's interrogation unit wrote, "Files relating to Adolf Eichmann, Martin Bormann or Heinrich Mueller (of the Gestapo) lay about for all to see in one of the offices."[174]

In addition to the historic files, Eichmann's name had been reintroduced in the public sphere in Israel during the famed 9 month Kastner trials.[175] Kastner, a Hungarian Jew and leader of the local Zionist relief organization in Budapest, attempted to negotiate with Eichmann during the Nazi occupation of Hungary to secure the release and deportation of several thousand Jews from Hungary instead of shipping them to concentration camps. Since Eichmann allowed only a fraction of 750,000 Jews in Hungary to leave, most of them being wealthy, Kastner received a great deal of criticism after the war for "collaborating" with the Nazis. Eichmann personally oversaw the implementation of the "final solution" in Hungary and as a result, over 450,000 Hungarian Jews died in concentration camps. Kastner was later publicly vindicated in 1958 by Israeli Attorney General Haim Cohen for doing what he could to save Jews during the war. Unfortunately, Kastner was assassinated on his doorstep in Tel Aviv in March 1957.[176] The result of the Kastner trial media fanfare propelled Eichmann, although generally believed to be dead, back into the domestic public arena as a key figure in the implementation of the "final solution."

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[173] Harel, The House on Garibaldi Street). Isser Harel was the chief of the Israeli foreign intelligence agency MOSSAD from its creation in 1951 until he resigned in 1963. Harel was the head of the Shai (intelligence arm of the Zionist defense force Haganah) from 1942 until Israel's independence in 1948.

[174] Yablonka and Cummings, "State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann," 12.

[175] Ibid 28–29.

[176] Yablonka and Cummings, "State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann," 29.

A. OPERATION EICHMANN TIMELINE

June 1950, Adolf Eichmann arrives in Geneo, Italy and acquires new identity papers from the Red Cross, with the help of the Catholic Church, and adopts the alias ‘Ricardo Klement’. Later that month he acquires an Argentine visa.

14 July 1950, Ricardo Klement arrives via passenger ship in Beunos Aires. Viera Eichmann and her two sons leave Austria and arrive Buenos Aires in 1952. Soon thereafter, Viera remarries to ‘Ricardo Klement’.

September 1957, Fritz Bauer (German prosecutor in Hessen) meets with the senior Israeli representative to West Germany, Eliezer Shinar, to share his suspicious that Adolf Eichmann is living in Buenos Aires. Fritz does not reveal his source, but gives an address: 4261 Chacabuco Street, Olivos, Buenos Aires. Bauer reports that Eichmann’s eldest son is using his real last name. No other identifying information is known.

January 1958, Isser Harel dispatches an experienced Mossad agent to investigate the report. House is owned by an expatriate German and is used as income rental property. Little else is found and no connection to the Eichmann name. Harel dispatches an agent to Frankfurt to meet with Bauer and relay the negative report. Bauer then agrees to give up the source in Buenos Aires: Lothar Hermann, a Jewish concentration camp survivor who is now blind.

March 1958, top Israeli police investigator, Ephraim Hofstaetter, is enroute to Argentina for an INTERPOL conference. Harel asks him to meet with the source. Hofstaetter brings a signed letter from Bauer as bona fides for the meeting. Hofstaetter uses cover as ‘representative of German authorities’ during his meeting. Hermann’s daughter had met a young man named Nicolas Eichmann. Nicolas claimed his father was a Nazi during the war. Nicolas was strongly anti-semitic. Hermann agreed to follow up on the Eichmann report and

try to find more information, but seems overly concerned about financial compensation.

May 1958, Hermann reports that the house at 4261 Chacabuco Street is owned by an Austrian named Francisco Schmidt. Schmidt has rented the house as two apartments. The apartment electricity meters are registered to tenants named 'Dagoto' and 'Clement'. Hermann is convinced that Schmidt is Eichmann's alias. Harel's agents check on Schmidt, who does own the house, but does not live there. Hermann continues to claim that Schmidt is Eichmann and further damages his credibility with the Mossad. Harel orders his team to gradually sever contact with Hermann.

June 1958 – December 1959, Harel determines that in light of the recent interest in Eichmann, and the fact that Israel had a lot of uncorrobated raw information on former Nazi's, a special unit should be created to investigate the available data. Several reports surface about Eichmann being in 'Bad Aussee' or 'Alt Aussee' in 1955 and 1959. Another report from the head of the Bureau for Investigation on Nazi War Crimes in Germany surfaced in October 1959 and claimed Eichmann was in Kuwait working for an oil company.[177]

December 1959, Dr. Bauer arrives in Israel with new information about Eichmann from his own private investigation. Bauer discovers that Eichmann was given a Red Cross passport in Italy under the name 'Ricardo Klement'. Additionally, Eichmann had been in hiding in a monastery in Croatia after the war and briefly visited his wife in Austria in 1950 before traveling to Italy and then Argentina. There was a Klement listing in the Buenos Aires phone book beginning in 1952. Klement also ran a laundry shop in the Olivos district in Buenos Aires; the same district as the address on Chacabuco street.

January 1960, Harel dispatches Zvi Aharoni, a senior agent, to Buenos Aires to find Ricardo Klement. Zvi tracks the Klements to San Fernando district. Believes that a family fitting the Eichmann profile may be in the area.

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[177] Harel, *The House on Garibaldi Street*, 31.

February 1960, additional agents sent to conduct surveillance and establish cover. Posing as real-estate investors, agents find a house believed to be that of Ricardo Klement and his family in San Fernando district of Buenos Aires. Agents acquire clandestine photographs of a man who fits Eichmann's description.

21 March 1960, Ricardo Klement is observed buying flowers at a shop near his house in San Fernando. This behavior is very atypical for the low income Mr. Klement. Agents observe Klement hand flowers to his wife at the door of their house and kiss her. 21 March is Viera and Adolf Eichmann's wedding anniversary. After independent analysis of the previous photos, Harel is convinced they have found Adolf Eichmann.

11 MAY 1960, Adolf Eichmann steps off the bus and begins the short walk down the dirt road to his home on Garibaldi Street. A few moments later, he is captured by five Israeli MOSSAD agents and brought to a safehouse in Buenos Aires. There, he is given a medical examination. The scars and on his body and his SS-blood type tattoo match the German military medical file on Adolf Eichmann. During his first interrogation, he states "Ich bin Adolf Eichmann" (I am Adolf Eichmann).

20 MAY 1960, an El Al airliner lands in Buenos Aires carrying an Israeli delegation to Argentina's 150th Anniversary Celebration.

21 MAY 1960, the Mossad team, posing as El Al aircrew, board the plane with Eichmann in a wheel chair and drugged. Eichmann is reportedly an ex-patriot Jew who is in poor health and wishes to return to Israel before he dies. The plan takes off for Israel that evening without incident.

23 May 1960, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion makes his announcement to the Knesset that Eichmann is in custody and will stand trial.

6 June 1960, Israel offers the story to Argentina that private Israel citizens tracked down Eichmann and approached him. Eichmann volunteered to travel to

Israel to stand trial. The story is immediately dismissed by Argentine foreign minister.

21 June 1960, Argentine representative to the United Nations and former collaborator with Himmler's secret police, Mario Amadeo, makes formal complaint to UN Security council.[178]

July 1960, President Frondizi declares the Israeli Ambassador "persona non-grata" in an effort to appease Nationalist elements in his own government.

August 1960, U.S. diplomats in Buenos Aires meet with their Argentine counterparts and relay the message to the Israelis that the crisis is over and diplomatic relations can resume.

April 1961, Adolf Eichmann trial begins in Israel

December 1961, Guilty verdict issued.

31 May 1961, Eichmann execution. Eichmann is hung at Ramleh prison

1 Jun2 1962, The Jewish daughter (Graciela Sirota) of the owner of the safehouse used by Mossad to hide Eichmann in Buenos Aires is kidnapped, tortured and released with a swastika burned into her breast. A second Jewish girl in Buenos Aires, Mirta Penjerek, was accused of supplying the Mossad with food and therefore murdered. The perpetrators of both attacks were never identified.[179]

[178] Goni, *The Real Odessa*, 317.

[179] Goni, *The Real Odessa*, 318.

APPENDIX B. ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

The first phase of the Arab-Israeli conflict can be viewed as a period of polarization between the Jewish population and the Palestinian Arabs during the British mandate from 1918 to 1948. During this period both the Jews and the Palestinians formed their own state institutions, including military and intelligence branches that mirrored those of the ruling British government. These institutions were essentially formed to combat each other, while avoiding direct British interference. The Israelis established the 'Haganah' as their military branch under the Yishuv ruling council. The Haganah's intelligence arm was called "Shai" and would be the precursor for the modern Shin Bet (domestic security), Mossad (foreign intelligence) and Aman (military intelligence). The Arabs declared Haji Amin al-Husseini to be their Grand Mufti (religious leader) in 1921. Haji Amin immediately went about the task of secretly organizing the prominent Arab families and intellectuals under one cohesive guiding command known as the "Supreme Arab Committee" (SAC).

The SAC's primary mission was planning and controlling a regional Arab revolt against British control and Jewish settlements in 1936. The revolt lasted until 1939 and was finally defeated by British forces with help from the Haganah. The Shai underwent major reforms as a result of the Arab revolt in an attempt to better predict and disrupt future organized Arab actions. In 1947, the day after the United Nations announced support for partition of Palestine between Jewish and Arab factions, the SAC directed another wave of terror attacks that killed hundreds of Jews.[180] The conflict between Jews and Arabs in the region was now fully realized as a polarized two party fight over territory and control.

After Israeli independence in 1948, the conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Jews intensified and became a conflict between states as Egypt , Jordan and Syria began supplying arms, intelligence, sanctuary, training and even

[180] Black and Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, 34–36.

operational guidance to Palestinian insurgents. The Palestinians also became more organized and sophisticated in their tactics. The Palestinians were given an opportunity to participate in Israeli politics. , Party nominations were approved by the Shin Bet, however, and closely monitored. Any Palestinian that wanted to express more radical or anti-Jewish views was marginalized. The end result of the political marginalization was to create a large pool of recruits for militant activity against Israel. Egypt exploited this pool of recruits, sending Colonel Mustafa Hafez to organize and lead an insurgent campaign against Israel between 1952 and 1956.

While insurgent violence against Israel had been a consistent problem since 1948, the violence increased 600% under Colonel Hafez with nearly 70 attacks against Israeli facilities and personnel occurring in 1956. Israel's response to the insurgent attacks, besides increased border and facilities security, was to form an elite raid force called Unit 101. Unit 101, led by Ahud Sharon, targeted Palestinian leaders. Although Unit 101 was intended to deter Arab attacks, the number of Arab attacks rose steadily between Unit 101's inception in 1953 and its disbandment in 1956. The wave of Arab guerilla attacks subsided after the newly formed Mossad conducted an agent operation that finally killed Colonel Hafez with a package bomb in 1956. The events of 1956 were quickly overshadowed as Egyptian forces occupied the portions of the Sinai Peninsula around the Suez Canal and blocked passage of Israeli ships. During the evolution of the regional conflict, the Palestinians reorganized their militant arm Fatah.

Fatah was established under Yasir Arafat in 1956 and later subsumed into the PLO. While Fatah was initially a guerilla organization with strong ties to Egypt, the PLO also had a uniformed military arm called the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA).[181] After the 1967 war, Dr. George Habash formed the leftist group the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) which initially competed

[181] Cheryl Rubenberg, *The Palestine Liberation Organization: Its Institutional Infrastructure* (Belmont, Massachusetts: Institute for Arab Studies, 1983), 11–12.

with the PLO and Fatah for both political and military leadership of the Palestinian cause.[182] By the end of the 1960s, Yassir Arafat had moved up from leadership of Fatah to assume control over the entire PLO. Yassir Arafat had already achieved considerable fame in Palestinian circles as an Arab freedom fighter and brought a more militant and dynamic approach to the PLO cause. Additionally, the Fatah and PFLP had been competitors in the campaign to champion the leadership of the Palestinian diaspora; however, they began cooperating more on militant actions against Israel by the early 1970s.

In 1967, the combined forces of Egypt, Jordan and Syria were decimated by Israel during the 6 days war. Israel expanded its extra-territorial holdings in the Golan, West Bank and Gaza. By the end of the conflict over 100,000 additional displaced persons, mostly Palestinians, had fled to refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan.[183] This event marked a transition for the Palestinian resistance and the beginning of a new phase of escalating violence and adaptive tactics and organizational strategies on both sides of the conflict. The large refugee population created a new pool of disgruntled Palestinians to recruit from, swelling the ranks of Fatah.

During the period from 1967 through the 1973 Yom-Kippur War, The Palestinians began to organize into a more centralized proto-government with political, military and intelligence institutions that were both distinct from their Arab state sponsors in Egypt, Syria and Jordan and also more sophisticated. The defeat of the Arab states in 1967 also forced the Palestinians nationalists to move into exile, often into Europe, while recognizing the inherent limitations of any support from their Arab sponsors.[184] The result of the demonstrated impotence of the Arab states against Israel both served to foment a greater sense of independent Palestinian identity and freedom of action without the need

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[182] "PFLP English Language website," accessed 23 April 2013 at: http://pflp.ps/english/category/documents/

[183] Geoffrey Regan, *Israel and the Arabs*, 36.

[184] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 172–174.

for any state sponsorship. The PLO, as the larger umbrella organization responsible for Palestinian nationalism, suffered a crisis of legitimacy as over 300,000 more Palestinians were in refugee status after the war and PLO economic and social control over its constituents was threatened.[185] The PLO response to the post-1967 existential crisis was to increase the scale and lethality of its guerilla campaign against Israel.

By February 1968, Fatah had lost over 200 fighters to Israeli forces during their attempts to re-establish the primacy of the violent struggle against Israel. Needing sanctuary outside of the Israeli occupied territories in order to consolidate and prepare for operations, Fatah began to collect its forces near the border town of Karamah in Jordan. Sympathetic to the Palestinian struggle, most Jordanian forces either ignored the infiltrators or provided support and even cover fire during missions to infiltrate Israel by crossing the Jordan River.[186] By early 1968 over 1,000 Fatah and PFLP fighters were encamped near Karamah in the shadow of a Jordanian division. In March 1968 the Palestinians had conducted over 30 cross border attacks into Israel from Karamah and although King Husayn feared Israeli reprisal he moved cautiously in discouraging guerilla strikes for fear of public backlash from his over 60% Palestinian population. On 21 March, Israel finally struck in force, assaulting Karamah with armor, artillery and airpower and systematically destroying the guerilla camps while at the same time engaging and inflicting severe casualties on Jordanian forces. Even though Israeli suffered the fewest casualties of the three parties, they still had 28 dead and 90 wounded with at least one aircraft and several tanks and other vehicles destroyed. The PLO rapidly exploited the Israeli losses in local media and reaped the rewards in terms of increased legitimacy and a surge in volunteers to join the armed struggle. By late 1969, the combined forces of Fatah and PFLP had increased from several hundred to several thousand.[187]

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[185] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 174.

[186] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 177.

[187] Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, 179–181.

By 1970, King Husayn had grown increasingly concerned about the long term consequences of harboring the now sizeable Palestinian guerilla forces in his country. After an incident at Dawson airfield in Jordan in early September, 1970, where PFLP members hijacked four airliners and forced them to land and, after failed negotiations for the release of Palestinian prisoners, destroyed the now empty aircraft in front of the international media. King Husayn feared that Jordan was now center stage for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the tenuous control of his Hashemite regime might be threatened. He decided to take decisive action against the PLO guerillas in Jordan on 17 September 1970 and by the end of the month, his forces had killed or captured hundreds of PLO guerillas and forced many more to flee. The PLO called it “Black September” and swore to avenge their comrades and punish Jordan.

Black September marked a turning point for the PLO. Yasir Arafat looked for ways to adapt to the defeat in Jordan and even exploit the loss and ordered the creation of the infamous “Black September Organization” which the PLO would publicly deny association with. BSO would actually work under the Fatah hierarchy and be controlled by Arafat’s trusted acolyte Ali Hasan Salameh aka “The Red Prince.” Salameh was the operational link between the BSO and the rest of Fatah. Fatah cofounder Salah Khalef aka Abu Iyad was placed directly in charge of BSO and reported to Salameh.[188] Later BSO would evolve into less of a cohesive group and more of an operational cover used by various elements of the PLO during the conduct of terror attacks. Ever adaptive, the PLO reacted to the Black September events by branching out to other sympathetic extremist groups such as the Japanese Red Brigade, the Irish Republican Army, and the Baader-Meinhof gang in Germany, the Basque separatists ETA, the Red Brigades in Italy and Action Directe in France.[189] By 1972, several non-Arab extremist groups had set up shop in Beirut and regularly participated in training

[188] Katz, *Guards Without Borders*, 37.

[189] Pedhazur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism*, 38.

with their PLO brethren.[190]Making good on the threats against Jordan, BSO killed Jordanian Prime minister Wasfi Tal on November 28, 1971.[191] The PLO then expanded its reach internationally and began to attack Israeli and other Western targets on an unprecedented scale.

By 1972, the PLO and other groups had come to fully appreciate the power of mass media, especially television, to broadcast their political message, influence populations both domestically and abroad, and most importantly the ability to influence policymakers. Ami Pedhazur noted:

> The Palestinian organization understood the great effect of a well-designed attack and how it was able to attract a mass audience all over the world while not necessarily requiring a high number of victims. Via this medium, they could distribute their political agenda quite effectively. Their attacks made us of what scholars termed the tools of a "theater of terror." While the strategic impact of such attacks was minor, its influence on the public and policymakers was immense.192

The 'theater of terror' was played largely through a series of airline hijackings, mostly by PFLP members, from the late 1960s to 1972, but as the PLO once again sought to direct attacks against Israel other means of spectacular attacks would be required for the stage. On May 8, 1972 four BSO members hijacked a Sabena Airlines jet enroute from Vienna to Tel Aviv. The four hijackers forced the plane to land at Lod airport in Israel and demanded the release of hundreds of PLO members held in Israeli prisons. Israel responded by negotiating with the terrorists until the Sayaret Matkal Unit could move into position. In a stunning display of counterterror tactics, the Sayaret stormed the plane on May 9th, killing two of the BSO team and capturing the other two. One passenger was killed but the operation was touted as a great Israeli success.[193]

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190 Klein, *Striking Back*, 160.

191Pedhazur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism*, 34.

192 Pedhazur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism*, 35.

193 Pedhazur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism*,36–37.

A few weeks later, the PLO responded to the May 9th counterterror action, while at the same time demonstrating their new international network of relationships. On May 30th, 1972 three members of the Japanese Red Army Faction, at the direction of the PLO and with PLFP logistical support, walked in the passport control terminal at Lod airport and began shooting randomly into the crowd of travelers with Kalashnikov rifles and hand grenades. After a brief gun battle with police, the incident ended with 26 civilian deaths and many more wounded. The spectacular attack at Lod forced the Israeli's to greatly improve security at airports and international El Al counters.[194] The period of escalating violence and adaptive tactics between Israel and the PLO was in full swing by the summer of 1972.

In July, Israeli agents killed the PLFP spokesman Ghassan Kanafani, who had sent photographs of himself with the three Japanese Red Army members from the Lod Airport attack to the Beirut newspapers. The Israeli public was outraged by the Beirut news and the Israeli response was a bomb attached to Kanafani's car and wired to the ignition. The blast killed Kanafani and his 17-year old niece.[195] The PLO responded by sending an 8 man team of Fedayeen to Libya to train for a special operation. On 5 September, the 8 man team conducted one of the most bold and publicly televised hostage operations the world had seen in Munich. After the massacre of the 11 Israeli Olympic team members at Munich, vengeance against those deemed responsible was established as a critical national goal.

Although most of the PLO members targeted during Operation Wrath of God were killed in the months immediately following Munich, the most significant targets such as Ali Hassan Salameh and Atef Bseiso were not killed until 1979 and 1992 respectively. Abu Daoud, another key operational leader and acclaimed "mastermind" of the Munich attack, died in 2010 at age 73 of kidney

194 Pedhazur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism*,38–39.

195 Pedhazur, *The Israeli Secret Services and the Struggle Against Terrorism*,39.

failure.[196] The strategic impact of Wrath of God was culminated with the combined Egyptian and Syrian surprise attack against Israel on October 6th, 1973. While Israel suffered the greatest negative impacts from their obsession with the tactic of assassination during the Yom Kippur War, the institutional memories of the European nations affected by Wrath of God would endure long past 1973. After the Bseiso assassination in Paris in 1992, the French suspected Mossad, but could not find any evidence. The French security service chief asked for a meeting with his Mossad counterpart and stated, "We know you killed Bseiso. We're still working on the proof. When it comes through, you'll get what's coming to you. In no way am I willing to allow you to turn Paris into your stage for acts of war and assassinations. We're not going back to the early seventies, when you did whatever the hell you wanted here."[197]

[196] Richard Spencer, "Black September Terrorist Who Masterminded the Munich Massacre, Dead in Syria," *The Telegraph*, 4 September 2010. accessed 24 May, 2013 at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/7871344/Black-September-terrorist-who-masterminded-the-Munich-massacre-dead-in-Syria.html

[197] Klein, *Striking Back*, 8.

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